Third meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean

Santiago, 22–24 April 2024

DECISIONS ADOPTED
DECISION III/1
NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling article 15, paragraph 5 of the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean (Escazú Agreement), according to which the Conference of the Parties shall examine and promote the implementation and effectiveness of the Agreement and, to that end, may formulate recommendations to the Parties on the implementation of the Agreement,

Emphasizing that the objective of the Escazú Agreement is 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,

Considering article 4, paragraph 3 of the Escazú Agreement, which establishes that each Party shall adopt the necessary measures, of a legislative, regulatory, administrative or any other nature, in the framework of its domestic provisions, to guarantee the implementation of the provisions of the Agreement,

Considering also article 13 of the Escazú Agreement, which establishes that each Party, to the extent of its ability and in accordance with its national priorities, commits to provide the resources for national activities that are needed to fulfil the obligations derived from the Agreement,

Considering further articles 10, 11 and 12 of the Escazú Agreement, on capacity-building, cooperation and the clearing house,

Recognizing the progress made by the Parties in developing their national implementation plans,

1. Urges the Parties to continue advancing towards the full and effective implementation of the Escazú Agreement, taking all necessary measures, to the extent of their abilities and in accordance with their national priorities, and considering the principles of the Agreement, building and strengthening their capacities and cooperation;

2. Welcomes the preparation of plans and road maps for the national implementation of the Escazú Agreement, through transparent, collaborative processes with significant public participation and the support of the Secretariat, which include strategic and priority measures for the implementation of the Agreement in the States Parties;

3. Highlights the valuable contribution of the Observatory on Principle 10 in Latin America and the Caribbean as the clearing house referred to in article 12 of the Escazú Agreement;
4. Welcomes the implementation guide for the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters for Latin America and the Caribbean,¹ prepared by the Secretariat, and recommends that it be updated regularly;

5. Thanks the Secretariat for its support and requests that it continue to facilitate understanding of how the Escazú Agreement works and to provide technical assistance to the Parties regarding national implementation;

6. Appreciates the support of international agencies and other organizations in advancing the implementation of the Escazú Agreement and invites the Secretariat to continue creating synergies and partnerships to support the development and implementation of the plans and road maps for national implementation and other initiatives of the Parties;

7. Invites all Parties to develop, with the support of the Secretariat, plans and road maps for the national implementation of the Escazú Agreement as soon as possible and no later than 2026 or two years after the entry into force of the Agreement in the State Party, as appropriate, with the significant participation of the public, indigenous peoples and local communities, and to report on progress in its implementation and follow-up at the next ordinary meetings of the Conference of the Parties;

8. Requests the Secretariat to prepare reports, for consideration at the next ordinary meeting of the Conference of the Parties, on national good practices related to the establishment, functioning and content of pollutant release and transfer registers (article 6, paragraph 4 of the Escazú Agreement) and to participation of the public in decision-making processes for granting environmental permits for projects and activities that have or may have a significant impact on the environment (article 7, paragraph 2 of the Agreement);

9. Urges the Parties to contribute to the voluntary fund to support the implementation of the Agreement, preferably through recurring multi-year or annual contributions;

10. Invites the Parties, States not party to the Agreement, international organizations, financial institutions and the private sector to increase their efforts to provide financial resources to support the implementation of the Agreement.

¹ LC/TS.2021/221/Rev.2.
DECISION III/2

ACTION PLAN ON HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS IN ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling article 9 of the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean (Escazú Agreement), which refers specifically to the protection of persons, groups and organizations that promote and defend human rights in environmental matters,


Recalling decision I/6 of the Conference of the Parties on human rights defenders in environmental matters, whereby an open-ended ad hoc working group on human rights defenders in environmental matters was established and entrusted with preparing an action plan in that regard, to be presented at the second ordinary meeting of the Conference of the Parties for consideration and adoption,

Taking note of the open and participatory process of preparing the draft action plan, which included in-person and virtual consultations between 2022 and early 2024, and with valuable input from the annual forums on the subject that took place in Quito in November 2022 and in Panama City in September 2023,

Convinced of the importance of advancing towards the full and effective implementation of article 9 of the Escazú Agreement and of having a regional framework for cooperation in this area,

Reaffirming the need to promote and deepen cooperation between the Parties, in accordance with article 11 of the Escazú Agreement, to take appropriate and effective measures to recognize, protect and promote all the rights of human rights defenders in environmental matters,

1. Adopts the Action Plan on Human Rights Defenders in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean, contained in annex 1 to the present decision;

2. Thanks the countries that coordinated the open-ended ad hoc working group (Chile, Ecuador and Saint Kitts and Nevis) and the Presiding Officers, for their leadership and good work, with the support of the Secretariat, and all the Parties and members of the public, for their valuable contributions;

3. Decides to maintain, until the close of the ordinary meeting of the Conference of the Parties to be held in 2030, the open-ended ad hoc working group on human rights defenders in environmental matters, which shall allow for meaningful public participation, especially by indigenous peoples and local communities, endeavouring to include persons or groups in vulnerable situations, with a new mandate to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the measures included in the Action Plan and to report to the Conference of the Parties;
4. *Also decides* to continue holding forums on human rights defenders in environmental matters in Latin America and the Caribbean, in 2025 and every two years thereafter, with recognized specialists in the field and with the assistance of the Secretariat;

5. *Invites* the Parties and all countries of the region to help to implement the Action Plan and to step up their efforts to develop and strengthen all necessary measures at the national level to ensure the rights of human rights defenders in environmental matters;

6. *Requests* the Secretariat to promote and facilitate, in collaboration with relevant organizations, activities aimed at strengthening the implementation of the Action Plan and progress towards the achievement of its objectives at the regional, subregional and national levels.
INTRODUCTION

The Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean (the Escazú Agreement) is the first environmental treaty in Latin America and the Caribbean region and the first in the world to contain specific provisions on the protection of human rights defenders in environmental matters.

Article 9 of the Escazú Agreement states that each Party shall guarantee a safe and enabling environment for persons, groups and organizations that promote and defend human rights in environmental matters, so that they are able to act free from threat, restriction and insecurity. It also establishes that each Party shall take adequate and effective measures to recognize, protect and promote the rights of those persons, groups and organizations, as well as appropriate, effective and timely measures to prevent, investigate and punish attacks, threats or intimidations that human rights defenders in environmental matters may suffer while exercising the rights set out in the Agreement.1

To support the implementation of article 9 of the Agreement, at its first meeting, held in Santiago from 20 to 22 April 2022, the Conference of the Parties to the Escazú Agreement decided to establish, through decision I/6, an open-ended ad hoc working group on human rights defenders in environmental matters.2

The working group is currently led and coordinated by Chile, Ecuador, and Saint Kitts and Nevis. In accordance with the decision, the working group on human rights defenders in environmental matters “shall allow for meaningful public participation, especially by indigenous peoples and local communities, endeavouring to include persons or groups in vulnerable situations, and receive the assistance of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean in its capacity as Secretariat”.

As set forth in the decision, the main task of the working group is to prepare an action plan in that regard and to present it to the Conference of the Parties, which will be held in 2024, for consideration and adoption.

Furthermore, in decision I/6, the Conference of the Parties agreed to hold an annual forum on human rights defenders in environmental matters with recognized specialists in the field, with the assistance of the Secretariat (the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)), following which a final report would be prepared to serve as input for drafting and review of the relevant action plan.

The First Annual Forum on Human Rights Defenders in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean was held in Quito, in November 2022. On that occasion, the public participated in various round tables, the outcomes of which were a set of proposals that formed the basis for the draft of the annotated index of the action plan.

---

Subsequently, at the second meeting of the Conference of the Parties, held in April 2023 in Buenos Aires, the coordinating countries of the working group presented the draft annotated index, which included preliminary content and the work streams that would be reflected in the action plan. Public consultations on the draft annotated index were held between 21 April and 6 July 2023.

At the Second Annual Forum on Environmental Human Rights Defenders in Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Panama from 26 to 28 September 2023, the coordinating countries of the working group presented a draft action plan that expanded on the contents of the annotated index and incorporated the input from the public consultation thereon. The draft action plan was also opened for public consultation between 6 November 2023 and 14 January 2024.

This revised action plan, which was prepared by the coordinating countries of the working group, presents the priority areas and strategic measures in greater detail. These priority areas and strategic measures were defined on the basis of input received through public participation, as well as contributions from various international organizations and States Parties. The plan of action is submitted for consideration and adoption by the States Parties at the third meeting of the Conference of the Parties, to be held at ECLAC headquarters in Santiago from 22 to 24 April 2024.

A. BACKGROUND AND CONTENT OF ARTICLE 9 OF THE ESCAZÚ AGREEMENT

Persons, groups and organizations that defend and promote human rights in environmental matters are among the most at risk of suffering human rights violations. In its historic resolution 40/11 of 2019, the United Nations Human Rights Council expressed great concern about the situation of these human rights defenders around the world, and strongly condemned the murders and all other human rights violations committed against them, highlighting that those acts may violate international law and undermine sustainable development at the local, national, regional and international levels.

The dramatic situation faced by human rights defenders in environmental matters in the region was also recognized by the then United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, Michel Forst, in his 2016 report, in which Latin America was deemed one of the most hostile regions for these persons.

The Escazú Agreement contains specific provisions for persons, organizations and groups that promote and defend human rights in environmental matters. However, the special consideration given to human rights defenders in environmental matters by the Escazú Agreement does not entail the establishment of new rights or special jurisdictions, nor does it recognize any additional rights other than those that every person already has under international human rights law. Rather, the Escazú Agreement reiterates and reaffirms commitments already assumed by States under international, regional and national frameworks and adapts them to the environmental sphere, facilitating their application to the work and specific situation of environmental defenders in view of the particular risks and threats they face in the region.

3 The text of the Escazú Agreement, the implementation guide of the Agreement prepared by ECLAC, the proposals made at the First Annual Forum and the outcomes thereof, and the input received from the public and the States Parties were used as the basis for the preparation of the draft by the coordinating countries. The implementation guide is available online at https://www.cepal.org/en/publications/48495-regional-agreement-access-information-public-participation-and-justice.

As stated in the implementation guide on the Escazú Agreement prepared by ECLAC, the content of article 9 may be structured around three main clusters of obligations for States Parties: (i) structural or systemic obligation to ensure a safe and enabling environment;\(^5\) (ii) obligation ex ante for preventive and protection measures;\(^6\) and (iii) obligation *ex post* for response measures.\(^7\)

In view of the above, the present draft aims to fulfil the obligations and provisions of the Escazú Agreement, and is intended to promote the implementation of the Agreement in partnership with a number of key institutions, which include the United Nations system.

The implementation of this action plan will, where relevant, complement and be synergistic with the functions of the Committee to Support Implementation and Compliance.

**B. OBJECTIVE**

The objective of the action plan is to highlight a set of priority areas and implement strategic measures to advance towards the full and effective implementation of article 9 of the Escazú Agreement.

**C. IMPLEMENTATION TIME FRAME**

The action plan will be implemented over a period of six years (April 2024 to April 2030).

**D. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION PLAN**

To implement this plan, each Party, to the extent of its ability and in accordance with its national priorities, shall: (i) seek State action at all levels (national, federal, subnational and local, as appropriate), including by the executive, legislative and judicial branches, and (ii) provide the means for national implementation within the framework set forth in article 13 of the Escazú Agreement.

Capacity-building and cooperation, obligations referred to in articles 10, 11 and 12 of the Agreement, are considered factors that reinforce the Escazú Agreement as a whole and support the implementation of and compliance with all the other provisions of the Escazú Agreement, including the obligations mentioned in article 9. The ultimate objective of cooperation is to create and strengthen national capacities to ensure compliance with the Agreement, based on the ability and priorities of each Party.

---

\(^5\) Article 9, paragraph 1 and article 4, paragraph 6.

\(^6\) Article 9, paragraphs 2 and 3. Paragraph 2: “Each Party shall take adequate and effective measures to recognize, protect and promote all the rights of human rights defenders in environmental matters, including their right to life, personal integrity, freedom of opinion and expression, peaceful assembly and association, and free movement, as well as their ability to exercise their access rights, taking into account its international obligations in the field of human rights, its constitutional principles and the basic concepts of its legal system.” Paragraph 3: “Each Party shall also take appropriate, effective and timely measures to prevent, investigate and punish attacks, threats or intimidations that human rights defenders in environmental matters may suffer while exercising the rights set out in the present Agreement.”

\(^7\) Article 9, paragraph 3: “Each Party shall also take appropriate, effective and timely measures to prevent, investigate and punish attacks, threats or intimidations that human rights defenders in environmental matters may suffer while exercising the rights set out in the present Agreement.”
Likewise, the implementation of the present plan may benefit from contributions to the voluntary fund established in article 14 of the Escazú Agreement, and the voluntary contribution of additional resources from other sources will be encouraged.

To develop the plan, meaningful public participation will also be sought, through mechanisms such as open dialogues, especially with persons, groups and organizations that promote and defend human rights in environmental matters, including indigenous peoples and local communities, and persons or groups in vulnerable situations.

The Secretariat of the Escazú Agreement will encourage partnerships with various stakeholders, such as international agencies, civil society organizations, development banks, the private sector, academia and the media, for implementation of the plan.

In accordance with article 4, paragraph 7 of the Agreement, no provision in the present plan shall limit or repeal other more favourable rights and guarantees set forth, at present or in the future, in the legislation of a State Party or in any other international agreement to which a State is party.

E. APPROACHES AND PRINCIPLES

The present action plan falls under the Escazú Agreement, and its implementation will therefore take into account the provisions of the Agreement and will seek to promote and comprehensively address the different topics considered in article 9 of the Agreement, through an approach based on priority areas and strategic measures.

The implementation of the plan will be guided by the principles established in article 3 of the Agreement, and by the applicable principles of international, environmental and human rights law. The cross-cutting implementation of gender, intergenerational, intersectional, territorial and intercultural approaches will also be encouraged in the different priority areas and strategic measures, and special consideration will be given to persons or groups in vulnerable situations, as defined in the Agreement.

Likewise, the implementation of the present plan should avoid overexposure and risks for those who promote and defend human rights in environmental matters.

F. PRIORITY AREAS AND STRATEGIC MEASURES

The action plan is structured around four interrelated and complementary priority areas: knowledge creation; recognition; capacity-building and cooperation for national implementation of the action plan; and evaluation, follow-up and review of the action plan. Each priority area includes a set of strategic measures proposed to achieve objectives.
Area A: Knowledge creation

Objective

Create more knowledge, raise awareness and disseminate information on the situation, rights and role of persons, groups and organizations that promote and defend human rights in environmental matters in Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as on the existing prevention, protection and punishment instruments.

Lines of action

A.1. Prepare an assessment of the situation of persons, groups and organizations that promote and defend human rights in environmental matters in the States Parties, which, depending on the availability of data, considers, among other factors: the number of victims or violations and the different types of violations; international and national instruments and mechanisms related to prevention, protection and punishment, such as early warning systems and protocols for action by national and subnational institutions; existing practices and other experiences and community-based initiatives and self-protection strategies carried out by those who promote and defend human rights in environmental matters.

The assessment will take into account information provided by the States Parties and other key stakeholders, and will provide relevant conclusions.

A.2. Ensure continuity and wider dissemination of spaces for capacity-building, exchanges and reflection on the situation of persons, groups and organizations that promote and defend human rights in environmental matters in Latin America and the Caribbean. These forums for exchange will be organized periodically starting in 2025, and every two years thereafter, for the duration of the present plan, and will include recognized specialists in the subject and the support of the Secretariat of the Escazú Agreement, and the thematic areas and methodologies will be determined through a participatory process.

A.3. Strengthen the content related to persons, groups and organizations that promote and defend human rights in environmental matters in the Observatory on Principle 10 in Latin America and the Caribbean, as the clearing house referred to in article 12 of the Agreement, promoting the dissemination, accessibility and understanding of the Agreement, and establishing synergies and linkages with other existing repositories. The assessment referred to in action A.1 will be published in the Observatory. The States Parties shall report on new relevant legislation, policies, plans and programmes that have entered into force, in order to update the information on this subject in the Observatory.

A.4. Disseminate the information gathered in this area, ensuring that it is accessible and understandable, in line with the standards of the Agreement. This process will take into account the problems that the public —and especially persons, groups and organizations that promote and defend human rights in environmental matters— may face in terms of connectivity and the digital divide.

Area B: Recognition

Objective

Publicly recognize the work and contribution of persons, groups and organizations that promote and defend human rights in environmental matters, helping to develop a culture that fosters a healthy environment, the strengthening of democracy, access rights and sustainable development.
Lines of action

B.1. Foster exchanges and partnerships between persons, groups and organizations that promote and defend human rights in environmental matters and the States Parties to advance in the recognition of their work.

B.2. Regularly implement measures for dissemination, communication and raising public awareness, which are adapted to the social, economic, cultural, geographical and gender characteristics of the public, and which relate to the situation of human rights defenders in environmental matters and the relevance of their essential work.

B.3. Organize activities to commemorate and recognize the work of persons, groups and organizations for their contributions to the promotion and defence of the environment, the strengthening of democracy, access rights and sustainable development, including posthumous recognition activities. As part of these activities, efforts will be made to ensure the participation of State authorities and managers, and the timely participation of those who promote and defend human rights in environmental matters, especially indigenous peoples and local communities, as well as the inclusion of persons or groups in vulnerable situations.

B.4. Forge partnerships with different stakeholders and national, regional and international forums or other bodies focused on environmental themes related to the present plan, in order to carry out activities for the recognition and promotion of the work and rights of persons, groups and organizations that promote and defend human rights in environmental matters, in accordance with the rules of each one.

Area C: Capacity-building and cooperation for national implementation of the action plan

Objective

Contribute, through capacity-building and cooperation, to the formulation and implementation by institutions of various laws, policies, plans, programmes or measures at the national, subnational or other levels for the recognition, protection and promotion of the rights of persons, groups and organizations that promote and defend human rights in environmental matters.

Lines of action

C.1. Formulate regional guidelines which are useful for the various stakeholders and which consider the approaches and principles of the present plan, to support the national review, adaptation and formulation of laws, policies, plans and programmes, along with prevention, investigation and punishment measures, with respect to attacks, threats or intimidations that persons, groups or organizations that promote and defend human rights in environmental matters may suffer.

C.2. Provide support and technical assistance to the Parties for the full and effective implementation of article 9 of the Escazú Agreement through the preparation and execution of national implementation plans and road maps, including capacity-building to assess the situation of persons, groups and organizations that promote and defend human rights in environmental matters, in accordance with national needs, contexts, specificities and priorities.
C.3. Create, foster or strengthen forums for coordination and collaboration with other bodies or existing mechanisms for the prevention, investigation and punishment of attacks, threats or intimidations that may be suffered by persons, groups or organizations that promote and defend human rights in environmental matters, in an effort to establish synergies between States and other stakeholders for the effective implementation of article 9 of the Escazú Agreement.

C.4. Encourage the observance of international regulations, recommendations and guidelines on respecting and ensuring a safe and enabling environment for persons, groups and organizations that promote and defend human rights in environmental matters.

C.5. Foster the establishment and strengthening of institutions that provide pro bono legal assistance to persons, groups and organizations that promote and defend human rights in environmental matters that have been victims of crimes and human rights violations.

C.6. Conduct training activities on the Escazú Agreement, with an emphasis on specific aspects of article 9, with persons, groups and organizations that promote and defend human rights in environmental matters and relevant stakeholders at the national, subnational and international levels, such as civil society organizations, journalists and social communicators, donors, private sector actors, development banks and financial institutions, international agencies, academia, governments at all levels and relevant State institutions, especially national human rights institutions and ombudspersons’ offices.

C.7. Carry out national or regional training and awareness-raising activities aimed at justice officials, such as judges and prosecutors, and persons who are involved in processes in which the State carries out functions seeking to guarantee access to justice, such as public security and law enforcement agents or other national institutions that play a key role in the functioning of mechanisms for care, prevention, investigation and punishment with regard to attacks, threats or intimidations that may be suffered by persons, groups or organizations that promote and defend human rights in environmental matters; also, facilitate dialogue and sharing of experiences on specific subjects among these justice officials and between them and the persons who promote and defend human rights in environmental matters.

C.8. Prepare materials in different formats and languages, with clear and understandable content, and disseminate them in an accessible manner, so that they can be used to inform, provide training and raise awareness on the contents of article 9 of the Escazú Agreement. The adoption of a participatory approach in this process will be encouraged.

Area D: Evaluation, follow-up and review of the action plan

Objective

Implement measures for evaluation, follow-up and review of the action plan within the framework of the institutional architecture of the Escazú Agreement, in accordance with the principles of transparency and accountability.

Lines of action

D.1. Support implementation, evaluation, monitoring and review of the measures of the action plan, with meaningful public participation, especially by persons, groups and organizations that promote and defend human rights in environmental matters, including indigenous peoples and local communities, endeavouring to include persons or groups in vulnerable situations.
D.2. Develop an implementation programme for this action plan that considers, among other factors, responsibilities, deadlines and possible sources of support.

D.3. Include in the regular reports of the Parties on the implementation of and compliance with the Escazú Agreement, within the framework established in article 15, paragraph 5(c) of the Agreement, the national measures and actions for the implementation of article 9 and those corresponding to the priority areas and strategic measures of this action plan, enabling the development of follow-up indicators.

D.4. Present the progress made in the implementation of the priority areas and strategic measures set forth in this action plan at the ordinary meetings of the Conference of the Parties to be held for the duration of this instrument.
DECISION III/3

NATIONAL FOCAL POINTS OF THE PARTIES

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling that decision I/1 on the rules of procedure of the Conference of the Parties defines a focal point as “a person officially designated by a Party to receive communications from the Secretariat relating to the Agreement”,

Convinced of the importance of each Party designating focal points and officially communicating this information so that these focal points may establish contact with the Secretariat and the other bodies of the Agreement and receive communications,

1. Invites each Party to designate the person or persons who will act as the focal point or focal points liaising between the States Parties and the bodies of the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean (Escazú Agreement) and to formally communicate this information to the Secretariat, using the form contained in annex 1 to the present decision;

2. Requests each Party to inform the Secretariat of any change in designation as soon as possible;

3. Decides that the national focal points of the Parties, as liaisons between the States Parties and the Secretariat and other bodies of the Agreement, shall perform the following functions, among others:

(a) Receive communications from the Secretariat and other bodies of the Agreement addressed to the State Party;

(b) Submit on behalf of the State Party requests for support regarding implementation and other requests for technical assistance to the Secretariat and other bodies of the Agreement;

(c) Submit on behalf of the State Party its national implementation plan, in accordance with article 13 of the Agreement, along with other official communications from the Parties;

(d) Ensure that the State Party is represented at in-person and virtual meetings held under the Agreement;

(e) Follow up on the preparation and timely dispatch to the Secretariat of letters of credentials designating representatives at official meetings, when appropriate;

(f) Support the dissemination of documents and relevant information within States Party, as appropriate;

(g) Respond in a timely manner to requests made to the Party by the Secretariat and other bodies of the Agreement;

(h) Collaborate with national focal points of other countries to facilitate the implementation of the Agreement;

(i) Support the coordination, promotion and facilitation of the national implementation of the Agreement.
Annex 1

Form to designate or update focal points serving as liaisons between the States Parties and the bodies of the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean

Are you designating a new focal point, updating the information of an existing one, or replacing a previous focal point?

- Designating a new focal point
- Updating the information of a designated focal point
- Replacing a previous focal point. In this case, please indicate the name of the outgoing focal point:

____________________________________________________________________________________

State Party (*): ____________________________

Name (*): ____________________________

Surname(s) (*): ____________________________

Position (*): ____________________________

Ministry/Department (*): ____________________________

Address: ____________________________

City: ____________________________ Postal code: ____________________________

Direct telephone line (include country code): ____________________________

Mobile phone number (include country code):

____________________________________________________________________________________

Official email address (*): ____________________________

Alternative email address: ____________________________

Comments (if applicable): ____________________________

Please send the completed form to secretaria.escazu@cepal.org. One form should be completed for each designated focal point. Please send: (1) the official letter of designation; (2) this form in Microsoft Excel format, available on the Secretariat’s web page.

The contact details of the designated focal points indicated with an asterisk (*) will be published on the Secretariat’s web page.
DECISION III/4
MAINSTREAMING THE GENDER PERSPECTIVE

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, and in particular Principle 20, which states that women have a vital role in environmental management and development and that their full participation is therefore essential to achieve sustainable development,

Recalling also resolution 70/1 of the General Assembly of the United Nations, relating to the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, of which the Goals and targets aim to ensure the human rights of all people and to promote gender equality and empower all women and girls, and in particular Goal 5 “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”,

Considering the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women (Convention of Belém do Pará), and relevant treaties, which aim to guarantee the exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis,

Considering also the commitments made by the member States of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, which make up the Regional Gender Agenda, and other relevant international commitments,

Reaffirming the principle of equality and the principle of non-discrimination established in article 3 of the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean (Escazú Agreement),

Considering the definition of “persons or groups in vulnerable situations” established in article 2 of the Escazú Agreement, understood as “those persons or groups that face particular difficulties in fully exercising the access rights recognized in the present Agreement, because of circumstances or conditions identified within each Party’s national context and in accordance with its international obligations”,

Considering also article 7, paragraph 10 of the Agreement, according to which “each Party shall establish conditions that are favourable to public participation in environmental decision-making processes and that are adapted to the social, economic, cultural, geographical and gender characteristics of the public”,

Highlighting the significant participation of women in the negotiation of the Escazú Agreement,

Recognizing the importance of continuing to advance gender equality in order to achieve the full and effective implementation of the Escazú Agreement,

1. Welcomes all measures, initiatives and activities aimed at integrating and strengthening the gender perspective in matters related to the Escazú Agreement;

2. Urges the Parties to continue to promote the full and effective participation of women in all their diversity, including indigenous women, and the incorporation of a gender-equality perspective into the implementation of the Agreement, particularly in their national implementation plans and road maps;
3. **Urges** the Parties to promote the aim and content of the Escazú Agreement in other regional and international forums that seek to contribute to gender equality and that favour synergies with the Regional Gender Agenda, in accordance with the rules of each one;

4. **Recommends** that the Parties incorporate the gender perspective into the creation of a safe and enabling environment for the defence of human rights in environmental matters, and to prevent discrimination and gender-based violence against women defenders;

5. **Requests** the Secretariat to continue recording progress in this area in the Observatory on Principle 10 in Latin America and the Caribbean as the clearing house referred to in article 12 of the Escazú Agreement;

6. **Requests** the Parties to report regularly to the Conference on the progress made in the incorporation of the gender perspective into the activities related to the Escazú Agreement;

7. **Requests** the Secretariat to prepare, with the support of the United Nations Entity Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and other agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations, a guide on mainstreaming the gender perspective in the implementation of the Escazú Agreement, and to present it at the next ordinary meeting of the Conference of the Parties;

8. **Appreciates** the support of the Secretariat, international agencies and other organizations in advancing gender mainstreaming and calls for continued efforts to create synergies and partnerships with all relevant stakeholders.
DECISION III/5

NEXT MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling article 15, paragraph 2 of the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean, which states that, after the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties, ordinary meetings of the Conference shall be held at regular intervals decided by the Conference,

Considering rule III of the rules of procedure of the Conference of the Parties, which states that ordinary meetings of the Conference of the Parties shall be held at least once every two years, unless the Parties decide otherwise, and that at each ordinary meeting, the Parties shall decide, in consultation with the Secretariat, on an indicative date and duration of the next ordinary meeting,

1. Agrees that the indicative dates for the next ordinary meeting shall be from 22 to 24 April 2026;

2. Invites Parties wishing to host the next ordinary meeting of the Conference to notify the Secretariat and agrees that, if no offer is received, the meeting will be held at the headquarters of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean in Santiago.
DECISION III/6

ELECTION OF PRESIDING OFFICERS

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling decision I/1 regarding the adoption of the rules of procedure of the Conference of the Parties and decision I/2 on the election of the Presiding Officers for the first and second ordinary meetings of the Conference,

Recalling also that rule VII of the rules of procedure of the Conference of the Parties provides that, at the second and subsequent ordinary meetings of the Conference of the Parties, a Chair and four Vice-Chairs shall be elected from among the Parties present at the meeting in question, giving special consideration to the need to ensure adequate geographical representation of the Parties and gender balance among representatives,

Reiterating that the Presiding Officers shall also include one of the elected representatives of the public, with a voice but no vote, and shall maintain a continuous dialogue with the public and with those representatives designated by the public, holding regular joint meetings,

Taking into consideration that the Presiding Officers shall remain in office until the closure of the second ordinary meeting of the Conference of the Parties, including for any extraordinary meetings that may be held in the interim,

1. Elects the following Presiding Officers: Uruguay as Chair and Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Mexico and Saint Lucia as Vice-Chairs, who shall remain in office until the closure of the next ordinary meeting of the Conference of the Parties, including for any extraordinary meetings that may be held in the interim;

2. Requests the public to designate one of its elected representatives, within two months of the adoption of the present decision, to be a member of the Presiding Officers with a voice but no vote, and to formally notify the Secretariat of this designation, as well as of any relevant changes that may occur.