

**FIRST MEETING OF THE COUNTRIES SIGNATORY TO THE  
REGIONAL AGREEMENT ON ACCESS TO INFORMATION, PUBLIC  
PARTICIPATION AND JUSTICE IN ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS IN  
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

**San José, 11–12 October 2019**

**GENERAL INFORMATION**



## INTRODUCTION

The first meeting of the countries signatory to the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean will take place San José, on 11 and 12 October 2019.

The purpose of this document is to provide delegates with useful information to facilitate their work at the meeting.

The meeting coordinators will be available to answer any questions concerning logistical or organizational matters that delegates may have before or during the event.

### 1. General information on Costa Rica

Costa Rica is located in the southern part of Central America and is bordered by Nicaragua to the north, the Caribbean Sea to the east, Panama to the south-east and the Pacific Ocean to the south and west.

The uninhabited Cocos island, which is covered with dense tropical forest, is located about 480 km south-west of the Osa peninsula in the Pacific Ocean and forms part of Costa Rican territory.

Costa Rica has a surface area of 51,100 km<sup>2</sup> and a population of 4,253,897.

Administratively, Costa Rica is divided into seven provinces: San José, Alajuela, Cartago, Guanacaste, Heredia, Limón and Puntarenas.

San José, Costa Rica's capital, is its largest and most populous city. It is located in the centre of the country and is a transit point with a daytime population of over 1 million people.

#### Language

Costa Rica's official language is Spanish; English is also spoken, especially in tourist areas.

#### Climate

Costa Rica has two seasons, the dry season from December to May and a rainy season from May to November. In the central valley, where San José is located, the average temperature is 21°C.

**Official website of the Ministry for Foreign and Religious Affairs: <https://www.rree.go.cr/>.**

## Useful information for visitors

<b>Local currency Colón (\$)</b>	The currency used in Costa Rica is the colón (plural: colones). The current exchange rate is approximately 575 colones to one United States dollar. Dollars, in cash or travellers' cheques, may be exchanged in almost all hotels and in banks. The exchange rate in hotels and in banks is almost always the same, so visitors are advised to exchange money at their hotel for greater convenience. All hotels accept dollars or credit cards, but change is mostly given in local currency. Most restaurants take credit cards, with Visa, MasterCard and American Express the most widely accepted. Although exchange facilities are readily available, visitors are advised to purchase some currency on arrival in Costa Rica. Credit cards (preferably Visa and MasterCard) may be used for cash withdrawals at some banks and automatic teller machines (ATMs) in San José.
<b>Local time</b>	UTC/GMT-6.
<b>Electricity</b>	110V. All hotels have electricity. Plugs have two flat prongs.
<b>Water</b>	Tap water is drinkable in most of Costa Rica. Nevertheless, travellers are advised to buy bottled water for personal consumption.
<b>Airport tax</b>	An exit tax of US\$ 29 per person is payable at the airport, although some airlines include this in the ticket prices. This should be confirmed this with the airline. Visitors travelling on a diplomatic passport are exempt from paying the exit tax.
<b>Tipping</b>	Hotel rates include all taxes, but do not include tips. Tips may be given to reward particularly satisfactory service. Restaurants automatically include taxes and a 10% tip in the bill. Therefore, if you wish to give a tip, it is recommended to check the invoice first to verify if this amount has already been included. Tips are not usually given to taxi drivers and are not included for other services.
<b>Taxis/remises</b>	San José has a good taxi service. Prices are controlled and metered (the meter is known as a maría), with a basic fare of US\$ 1.13 per kilometre. Cabs are red with a yellow triangle on their forward doors. Airport taxis are orange and very reliable. The basic taxi fare is US\$ 1.70 per kilometre. Hotel taxis have set fares for specific routes, although these differ little from regular fares. Visitors are advised not to use unauthorized taxi services.

## 2. Meeting venue

The first meeting of the countries signatory to the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean will be held in the **Salón Cocorí** of the **Double Tree by Hilton** hotel.

### Double Tree by Hilton

Address: San Antonio de Belén, Ciudad Cariari  
San José

Telephone: (+506) 2239 0022

[www.CariariSanJose.DoubleTree.com](http://www.CariariSanJose.DoubleTree.com)

## 3. Meeting coordination

The meeting is being organized by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the Government of Costa Rica, through the Ministry for Foreign and Religious Affairs.

Questions on substantive matters related to the meeting may be addressed to Carlos de Miguel, Chief of the Sustainable Development Policies Unit, Valeria Torres, Economic Affairs Officer, and David Barrio, Environmental Affairs Officer, of the Sustainable Development and Human Settlements Division of ECLAC, ([principio10.lac@cepal.org](mailto:principio10.lac@cepal.org), tel. (+56) 2 2210 2310, (+56) 2 2210 2224 and (+56) 2 2210 2441). On behalf of the Ministry for Foreign and Religious Affairs

of Costa Rica, Adriana Solano Laclé, Head of the International Law and Human Rights Department of the Directorate-General for Foreign Policy ([adsolano@rree.go.cr](mailto:adsolano@rree.go.cr), tel. (+506) 25395559) and Roberto Céspedes, Adviser with the International Law and Human Rights Department of the Directorate-General for Foreign Policy ([rcespedes@rree.go.cr](mailto:rcespedes@rree.go.cr), tel. (+506) 25395570), will be available to participants.

Consultations on operational aspects of the meeting may be addressed to María Paz Rivera ([mariapaz.rivera@un.org](mailto:mariapaz.rivera@un.org), tel. (+56) 2 2210 2618) and alternatively to Mariana Madrigal ([mmadrigal@rree.go.cr](mailto:mmadrigal@rree.go.cr), tel. (+506) 25395513).

#### 4. Hotel reservations

The ECLAC Conference Services Unit has reserved a block of rooms at special rates at the hotel where the meeting will take place:

- **DOUBLE TREE BY HILTON (*meeting venue*)**

San Antonio de Belén, Ciudad Cariari

San José

Telephone: (506) 2239 0022

Contact: Yocelyn Víquez

E-mail: [reservas@cariari.co.cr](mailto:reservas@cariari.co.cr) / [yocelyn.viquez@cariari.co.cr](mailto:yocelyn.viquez@cariari.co.cr)

Standard single room: US\$ **105** + 13% tax (includes breakfast and Internet)

Standard double room: US\$ **120** + 13% tax (includes breakfast and Internet)

Reservation requests should be addressed directly to the hotel by **27 September 2019, using the form attached below**. The hotel cannot guarantee the special rate or the availability of rooms after this date.

Delegates are responsible for making their own reservations. It is advisable to check that the hotel has processed your reservation and to request a confirmation code or number.

A credit card number is required to make a reservation. Hotels in Costa Rica apply a no-show policy whereby reservations may be cancelled **up to 48 hours prior** to expected arrival; otherwise cardholders who fail to appear will be charged for the first night. All delegates must settle their own hotel bill at the end of their stay.

#### 5. Entry requirements for Costa Rica

##### Entry visa

All foreigners must enter Costa Rica with a valid passport, ticket for their return journey or onward travel, and at least US\$ 100 per month of tourist stay.

Circular DG-12-05-2019 of the Directorate-General for Migration and Aliens stipulates that nationals of the following Latin American and Caribbean countries **require a visa** to enter Costa Rica:

- Colombia
- Cuba
- the Dominican Republic
- Ecuador
- Haiti
- Jamaica
- Nicaragua

Nationals of other Latin American and Caribbean countries do not require a visa to enter Costa Rica. For specific queries on other nationalities and passport validity requirements, please see circular DG-12-05-2019, available online at:

<https://migracion.go.cr/Documentos%20compartidos/Visas/Directriz%20de%20Visas%20DG-12-05-2019.pdf>

### **Yellow fever vaccine**

Visitors from the countries listed in directive DM-CB-3109-2018 of the Ministry of Health must provide proof that they have been vaccinated against yellow fever. Please note that this requirement is determined by the country from which the visitor is travelling, not that of his or her nationality.

### **List of Latin American and Caribbean countries considered at risk of yellow fever transmission:**

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, French Guiana, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago.

Compliance with the immunization requirements must be verified by the relevant authorities (at ports, airports and border posts) by means of the international certificate of vaccination against yellow fever, which becomes valid 10 days after the date of administration of the vaccine. This document must be valid and be presented in its original form.

However, the following people are exempt from the yellow fever vaccination requirements:

- Those who on route to Costa Rica have transited through airports, ports or international border posts in countries considered at risk (article 6, paragraph 1 of Executive Decree No. 33934-S-SP-RE).
- Those who have remained at least six days in a non-risk country before entering Costa Rica and have not developed the disease during that period (article 7 of Executive Decree No. 33934-S-SP-RE).

People affected by the following contraindications for this vaccine will also be exempted:

- Absolute contraindications: infants aged less than nine months; people with a severe allergy to egg, immunodeficiency and thymoma or history of thymectomy.
- Relative contraindications, in which case there should be a medical assessment of the pros and cons of vaccination: people aged over 60; pregnant or breastfeeding women; people with a family history of adverse events associated with the yellow fever vaccine; people with hypersensitivity to gelatin; and people with asymptomatic HIV infection, with laboratory verification of adequate immune system function.

A medical certificate must be presented to support any of these exemptions.

**Any queries in relation to matters of entry to Costa Rica (visas or yellow fever vaccinations) should be addressed directly to the nearest Embassy of Costa Rica.**

## **6. Local transport**

Participants are responsible for their own transportation between the airport and the hotel.

## **7. Online registration and participant registration**

An online registration system will be available on the ECLAC website (<https://www.cepal.org/en/escazuagreement>) as from **11 September**.

Registration of participants will take place from 8.30 a.m. on Friday, 11 October in the lobby of the **Salón Cocorí** at the **Double Tree by Hilton**.

Participants will be issued with identification badges, which, for security purposes, must be shown at all meetings.

For any further information on participant accreditation, please contact Paula Warnken ([paula.warnken@un.org](mailto:paula.warnken@un.org), tel. (+56) 2 2210 2651) or María Paz Rivera ([mariapaz.rivera@un.org](mailto:mariapaz.rivera@un.org), tel. (+56) 2 2210 2618).

Online registration does not exempt participants from the requirement to send an official note to the Secretary of the Commission indicating the names of the head of delegation and accompanying members.

## **8. Opening session**

The opening session of the meeting will commence at **9 a.m.** on **Friday, 11 October 2019.**

## **9. Internet**

A wireless Internet connection (Wi-Fi) will be available in the offices provided for the meeting and in the conference rooms.

## **10. Languages**

The official languages of the meeting will be English and Spanish. Simultaneous interpretation will be provided.

## **11. Medical service**

The Government of Costa Rica will provide first aid services in the event that emergency medical assistance is required the meeting venue.

## **12. Documents**

This will be a paper-smart meeting. All official documents and statements will be made available to read or download at the website <https://www.cepal.org/en/escazuagreement>. Participants are advised to bring their laptop computer, tablet or other mobile device to the meeting, since only a limited number of printed documents will be available.







UNITED NATIONS



COSTA RICA  
GOBIERNO DEL BICENTENARIO  
2019 2022

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San José, 11–12 October 2019

### HOTEL RESERVATION REQUEST

First name		Last name	
Head of delegation <input type="checkbox"/>	Delegate <input type="checkbox"/>	Observer <input type="checkbox"/>	Special guest <input type="checkbox"/>
Official title:		Agency or institution:	
Address:			
City:		Country:	
Telephone:	Fax:	E-mail:	

Hotel information:

<b>DOUBLE TREE BY HILTON (<i>meeting venue</i>)</b>		
San Antonio de Belén, Ciudad Cariari San José		
Telephone: (+506) 2209 1000		
Standard single room: US\$ <b>105</b> plus 13% tax	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Standard double room: US\$ <b>120</b> plus 13% tax	<input type="checkbox"/>	
*Rate includes breakfast and Internet.		
E-mail: <a href="mailto:reservas@cariari.co.cr">reservas@cariari.co.cr</a> / <a href="mailto:yocelyn.viquez@cariari.co.cr">yocelyn.viquez@cariari.co.cr</a>		
<b>Contact:</b> Yocelyn Viquez		
Date of arrival in Costa Rica:	Flight number:	Arrival time:
Date of departure from Costa Rica:	Flight number:	Departure time:

I authorize the use of the following credit card to secure my reservation:

American Express <input type="checkbox"/>	MasterCard <input type="checkbox"/>	Visa <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>
Credit card number/security code:			Expiry date:

Reservation requests should be addressed directly to the hotel **no later than 27 September**.