



Framework Programme

Promoting the implementation of Principle 10 of Rio Declaration in Latin American and Caribbean regions

Background

The Rio+20 Conference in 2012 renewed the commitment of heads of states and governments to sustainable development, reaffirmed all the principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, and the commitment to fully implement the Rio Declaration and the Agenda 21.

At Rio+20 Conference, ten Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) countries signed a declaration “Declaration on the application of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development” and they agreed to work towards a regional instrument on access to information, participation and justice regarding environmental issues in LAC. Since then the signatories of the declaration have increased to 20 countries, and with the support of ECLAC as technical secretariat, a Roadmap and a Plan of Action was developed and approved, as well as a common vision of the instrument. A regional dialogue started in 2022 and after four Focal Points meeting and several working group meetings in November 2015, countries launched official negotiations on a regional instrument.

The 20 Signatory countries of the Declaration on the application of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration gathered at the headquarters of ECLAC in Santiago, Chile on May 5-7, 2015 for their first Negotiating Committee meeting of the regional instrument on Principle 10. During the meeting they agreed on the organization and work plan of the Committee, with a view to concluding negotiations on the regional agreement by December 2016.

Goals and Objectives

- Promote and support the regional efforts to implement Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration in the LAC region, in particular the 2012 Declaration on the Application of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration;
- Facilitate the cooperation and interregional experience sharing on Principle 10 implementation with a view to support the negotiation process of the regional instrument (between UN ECLAC and its stakeholders, and the UNECE Aarhus Convention parties);

Planned results

- Developed progressive regional instrument for access rights on environmental matters in LAC region with the substantial involvement of all relevant stakeholders

- Empowered and strong CSOs to be able to contribute to and influence the negotiations, and work on the implementation of the regional commitments on P10 at the national level.

Programme Activities

Work package 1: Interregional cooperation on implementation of Principle 10 of Rio Declaration

The LAC countries are interested to benefit from UNECE region's experience in developing the regional cooperation framework for Principle 10 implementation and the lessons learned from the drafting of a regional instrument (Aarhus Convention), as well as its decade of implementation. The experience of the UNECE region has been greatly referred to and consulted so far, and is contributing to the LAC regional dialogue.

Thus this work package will ensure facilitation of interregional cooperation on implementation of Principle 10 through information exchange, transfer of lessons learned, sharing of good practices in ensuring access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters, on the basis of the experience in the UNECE region. More specifically it will focus on the experience of the Aarhus Convention negotiations and its practical implementation and particularly, on issues of relevance to ECLAC, and the LAC governmental and CSO stakeholders. For more info: <http://www.cepal.org/rio20/principio10/default.asp?idioma=IN>

Work package 2: Capacity building for civil society organisations and other stakeholders

The P10 in LAC process should become a model for a transparent, inclusive and collaborative regional initiative with the active and equal engagement of civil society, the public and all the relevant stakeholders. To this end the CSOs should be well prepared and equipped with knowledge, skills and tools to be able to be equal partners in the negotiation and implementation process.

Thus, this work package will focus on enhancement of the CSOs' capacities, role and participation in negotiation process of the regional LAC instrument. It will offer LAC experience from other international fora as well as from the former processes of UNECE CSO involvement in a similar negotiation, such as the Aarhus Convention by sharing the best practice examples and lessons learned on environmental democracy.

Work package 3: Promotion and awareness raising of Principle 10 process

Promotion of the Principle 10 process at the sub-regional and national level will be ensured mainly via support for stakeholder consultations on the draft text of the regional instrument and its potential implications at the national level. Additional support to national communication, awareness raising and media campaigns to promote P10 LAC process and the access rights initiatives will be sought.

Through this work package, national CSOs could be supported to establish and host information and assistance centres on P10 implementation which potentially can also offer legal assistance from pro-bono public interest lawyers for CSOs and the members of the public.

Funding

Several initial activities within the work packages of this Framework programme have been already supported to share experiences between the UN ECLAC and UNECE Aarhus Convention stakeholders:

The program was launched with seed funding for a project "Building Bridges between Regions", which was funded by the Abu Dhabi Environmental Agency (AED/AGEDI) within the Eye on Earth, Special Initiative Access for All (A4A) for the period of December 2013 - December 2014 (for more information please consult the project website www.building-bridges.rec.org).

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For more information on how to get involved, please contact Tsvetelina Filipova, Participatory Governance REC Filipova@rec.org