



Organization of  
American States

## DIALOGUE

### **ADVANCING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN CENTRAL AMERICA AND THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC**

PRELIMINARY PROGRAM

*Tuesday, October 21, 2014*

*Ruben Dario Room, OAS General Secretariat Building, Washington, D.C*

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To improve representation of all sectors of civil society and legitimize decisions throughout the different areas of public policy, opportunities and spaces for public participation should be generated and widely promoted. These participation platforms are essential for the development of consensus, processes, new possibilities and solutions around public policy issues in order to build a more democratic and inclusive society.

In order to participate and influence decision-making processes for sustainable development, it is essential that civil society organizations and, in general, any citizen, may have access to information, feel represented by decisions, legitimize these processes, facilitate and improve the implementation of public policies and have access to justice.

The Inter-American Strategy for Public Participation in Decision Making for Sustainable Development (ISP) aims to ensure such access rights. Thus, the Declaration of Santo Domingo for Sustainable Development of the Americas calls to promote citizen and public participation as a key element in the sustainable development policy decision-making process and to support OAS member States' efforts to implement the ISP.

Everyday, our region makes additional efforts to facilitate effective, involved, informed, and timely participatory processes in decisions that affect development and the environment. These efforts attempt to achieve a thorough strengthening of environmental management and the building of sustainable development in the region.

In this context, the General Secretariat of the OAS, with the objective to support its member States in the implementation of the ISP, is executing the project "Strengthening of Public Participation Mechanisms for Sustainable Development" along with a number of actors from the public sector and civil society. As a result, a series of manuals on public participation in the area of sustainable development have been prepared, detailing in a clear and precise manner "step-by step" procedures, mechanisms, and opportunities that national legislations provide to all citizens in Central America and the Dominican Republic.



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To present these manuals and to show progress on access rights in the context of sustainable development in Central America and Dominican Republic, a dialogue will be organized as a prelude to the IV Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Committee on Sustainable Development. This dialogue will take place at the OAS Headquarters, with the participation of distinguished authorities from the region, including representatives of the OAS Permanent Missions, civil society representatives and other social actors.

3:00 pm      Welcome Remarks

- Anne Hall, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, U.S Department of State.
- Ambassador Leónidas Rosa Bautista, Permanent Representative of Honduras to the OAS
- Ambassador Albert Ramdin, OAS Assistant Secretary General

3:30 pm      Dialogue on Public Participation for Sustainable Development in Central America and the Dominican Republic  
*Moderated by: Lina Pohl, Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, El Salvador*

- Patricia Abreu Fernández, Vice Minister for Cooperation and International Affairs, Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, Dominican Republic
- Patricia Madrigal, Vice Minister, Minister of Environment and Energy, Costa Rica
- Xiomara Cubas, Coordinator, National Council for Sustainable Development, Honduras

4:45 pm      Open Dialogue and Discussion

5:15 pm      Closing Remarks

- Sherry Tross, Executive Secretariat for Integral Development, OAS