

Monday
26
November

18:15
M6 - Marie Khan
Women's Caucus
Room, Building 2

SIDE EVENT - CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY COP14

Implementation of the CBD and environmental democracy through Human Rights, Nature Rights and the Escazú Agreement

Illustration: Amnesty International

This side event intends to be an interactive and provocative dialogue to motivate further work on Human Rights and Biodiversity within the CBD, by sharing the work done on this issue by civil society and regional experiences, focusing on the “Escazú Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean”; and also to explore its relation with Nature Rights by understanding the legal and policy advances in this field.

Presentations:

- The Escazú Agreement, its contribution to environmental democracy and the CBD. By Ana Di Pangracio, Deputy Director at Fundación Ambiente y Recursos Naturales (Argentina) and Board member of the CBD Alliance.
- Environmental human rights defenders: contributions of the Escazú Agreement to their protection. By Carmen Capriles, Coordinator of Reacción Climática (Bolivia)
- What does it mean to be an environmental human rights defender when we talk about biodiversity? Defenders will share their personal experiences.
- Women's courageous roles as guardians of Earth's ecosystems. By Claudia Ituarte-Lima, International Environmental Law Advisor at Swedbio
- Legal advances on Nature Rights and its relation with Human Rights and the CBD. By Gadir Lavadenz, Coordinator of the CBD Alliance.
- Remarks from the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)
- Remarks from the Costa Rica delegation

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Background

The 2011-2020 Work Program of the Convention on Biological Diversity is about to come to an end, and despite the effort put and progress made, evidence demonstrates that we are still far from reaching the goals and targets. Now, at the doors of a new decade of work, urgent measures must be taken in order to create a true and deep change on how we perceive and interact with nature in the understanding that the rising rates of poverty, famine and inequality reflect complex social realities that are intricately interwoven into the present ecological crisis.

When considering the post 2020 global biodiversity framework, it is imperative that right holders including indigenous peoples and local communities, and all stakeholders are effectively involved. While the relationship between human rights and biodiversity is increasingly recognized, the escalating harassment and murder of environmental defenders is alarming in addition to attempts in some countries to limit the activities of non-governmental organizations. In 2017, it is estimated that 197 people were murdered for exercising their participation rights to defend the environment.

Facing such situation, important initiatives emerge such as the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean, also known as the "Escazú Agreement" (Principle 10, Rio Declaration). The region's first treaty on environmental matters and the world's first to include provisions on human rights defenders in environmental matters. This legally binding regional treaty, open to signature (already 15 signatories) and ratification, is not only a ground-breaking legal instrument for environmental protection, but it is also a human rights treaty.

The relation between Human Rights and Biodiversity is also linked to the discussion around Nature Rights. Nature cannot speak on its own so it needs people to speak on its behalf which cannot happen if environmental defenders' rights to information, participation, access to justice and ultimately, right to life are under threat by persecution and murder. On the other side, how can there be life on Earth without biodiversity and ecosystems that sustain us all? Has environmental governance reached its limits? Can Nature Rights become an innovative way to interact with nature and achieve the ultimate goals of the Convention on Biological Diversity?

Co-conveners:

- Swedbio, Stockholm Resilience Center
- Fundación Ambiente y Recursos Naturales (FARN)
- Reacción Climática
- CBD Alliance (CBDA)

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Social media:

#Sign4theEnvironment 

#FirmaXelAmbiente

#AcuerdoEscazu

#EscazuAgreement

#WeavingHumanRightsNature

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