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United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

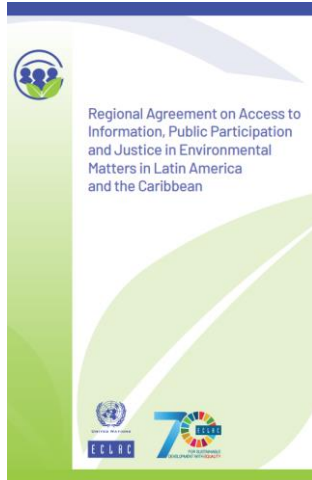


The Escazú Agreement: a pathway to developing an Environmental Information System (EIS)

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Belize, 9 November 2022

Basic facts



Adopted in Escazú (Costa Rica) on **4 March 2018**

Entered into force on 22 April 2021

- **First regional environmental treaty** of Latin America and the Caribbean
- **Creation and strengthening of capacities and cooperation**
- **Article 6: Generation and dissemination of environmental information**

24 signatories

13 Parties

**Belize – Signatory since Sept. 2020 /
ratification pending**

Facilitating **policy** formulation, **technical** cooperation, training and **capacity-building**, strategic **advocacy** and awareness, joint **studies**, publications, reports and analytical work and promoting a **green recovery** COVID-19



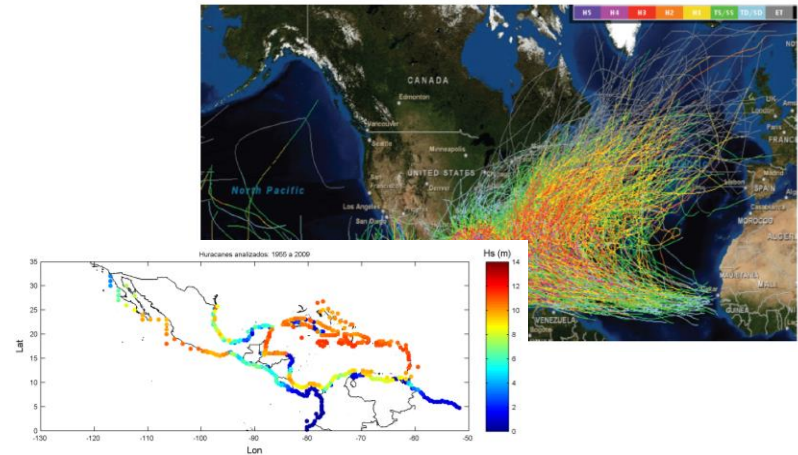


Underlying basis of the Escazú Agreement



Environmental issues are best handled with the active participation of all concerned

Access to environmental information is critical for sound policy-making



Environmental harm must be prevented and remedied

Regional cooperation is key



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Salient features of the Escazú Agreement



- Achieving a healthy environment and sustainable development
- Rights-based
- People-centered
- Leave no one behind
- Capacity-building and cooperation

Environmental dimension of sustainable development

Generation and access to environmental knowledge and information

Meaningful engagement of all sectors of society

Redress and remedy against environmental harm

Special consideration of Small Island Developing States

Implementation support

Progressive realization

Environmental information



ART. 5 ACCESS TO ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION

ACCESSIBILITY OF ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION

In accordance with the principle of maximum disclosure

RIGHT OF ACCESS TO ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION IN POSSESSION, CONTROL OR CUSTODY OF THE STATE

WE HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

- Request information from authorities without mentioning an interest or giving reasons
- Receive such information promptly
- Challenge its non-delivery

PAY ATTENTION TO PERSONS OR GROUPS IN VULNERABLE SITUATIONS

REFUSAL OF ACCESS TO ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION

ACCESS TO INFORMATION MAY BE REFUSED IN ACCORDANCE WITH DOMESTIC LEGISLATION

THE REASONS FOR REFUSAL SHALL BE LEGALLY ESTABLISHED IN ADVANCE AND BE CLEARLY DEFINED AND REGULATED

WHEN THE INFORMATION IS NOT PROVIDED, THE AUTHORITY MUST NOTIFY IN WRITING

CONDITIONS APPLICABLE TO THE DELIVERY OF ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION

IN THE FORMAT REQUESTED BY THE APPLICANT, IF AVAILABLE

RESPOND TO REQUEST AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE

THIS PERIOD MAY BE EXTENDED WITH DUE JUSTIFICATION IN WRITING

IT SHALL BE DISCLOSED AT NO COST, INSOFAR AS ITS REPRODUCTION OR DELIVERY IS NOT REQUIRED. SUCH COSTS SHALL BE REASONABLE AND MADE KNOWN IN ADVANCE, AND PAYMENT CAN BE WAIVED

INDEPENDENT OVERSIGHT MECHANISMS

ONE OR MORE IMPARTIAL ENTITIES OR INSTITUTIONS TO PROMOTE TRANSPARENCY IN ACCESS TO ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION



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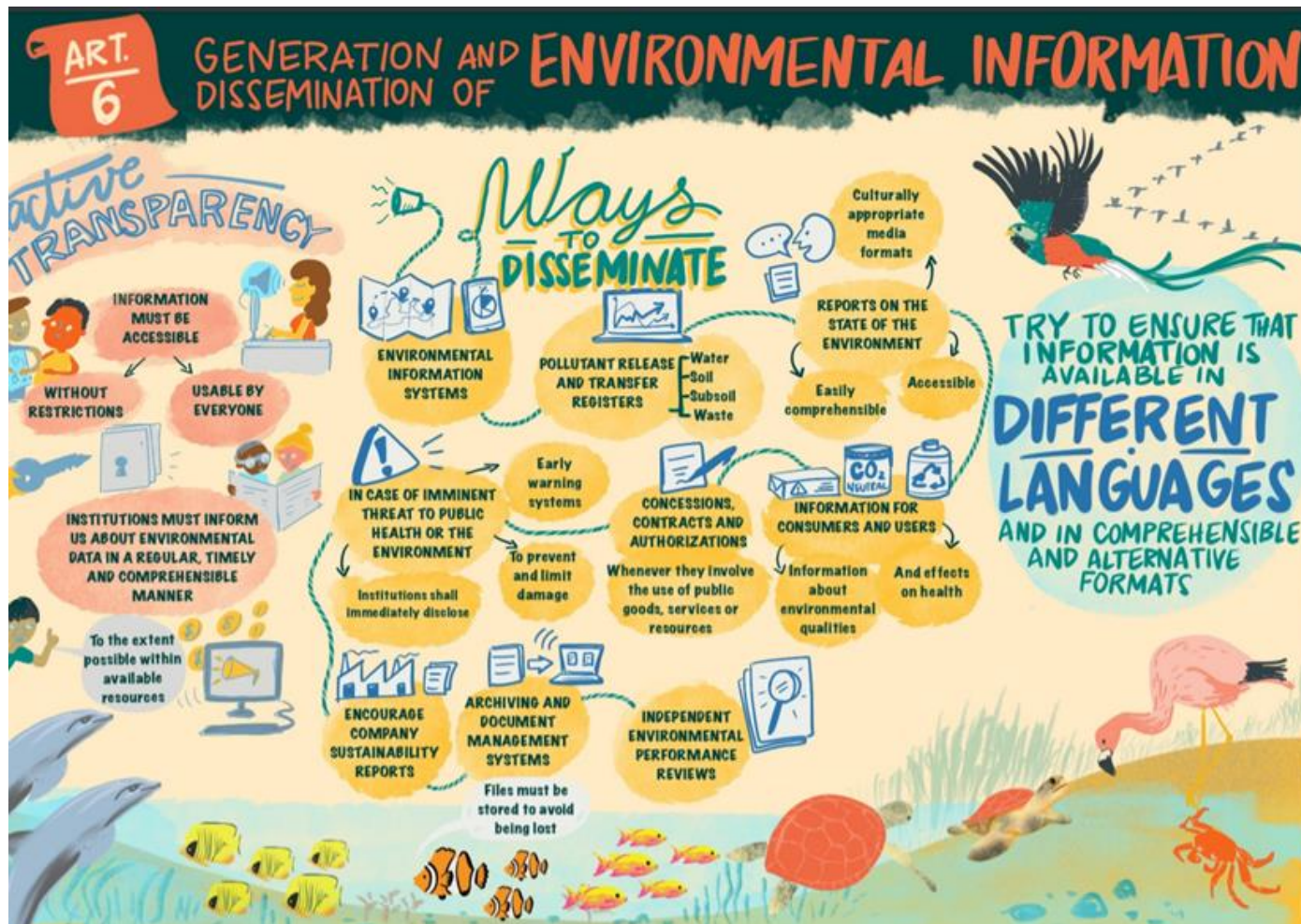
READ THE AGREEMENT 2



GET TO KNOW THE OBSERVATORY



Environmental information



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READ THE AGREEMENT



GET TO KNOW THE OBSERVATORY



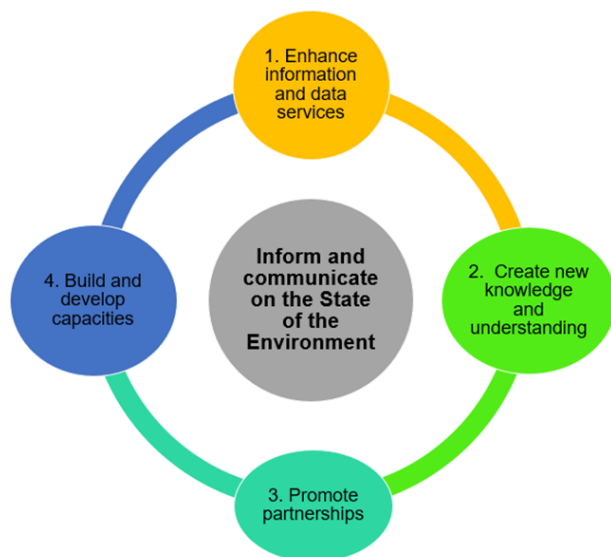
Environmental information systems under Escazú



3. Each Party shall have in place one or more up-to-date environmental information systems, which may include, inter alia:
 - (a) the texts of treaties and international agreements, as well as environmental laws, regulations and administrative acts;
 - (b) reports on the state of the environment;
 - (c) a list of public entities competent in environmental matters and, where possible, their respective areas of operation;
 - (d) a list of polluted areas, by type of pollutant and location;
 - (e) information on the use and conservation of natural resources and ecosystem services;
 - (f) scientific, technical or technological reports, studies and information on environmental matters produced by academic and research institutions, whether public or private, national or foreign;
 - (g) climate change sources aimed at building national capacities;
 - (h) information on environmental impact assessment processes and on other environmental management instruments, where applicable, and environmental licences or permits granted by the public authorities;
 - (i) an estimated list of waste by type and, when possible, by volume, location and year; and
 - (j) information on the imposition of administrative sanctions in environmental matters.

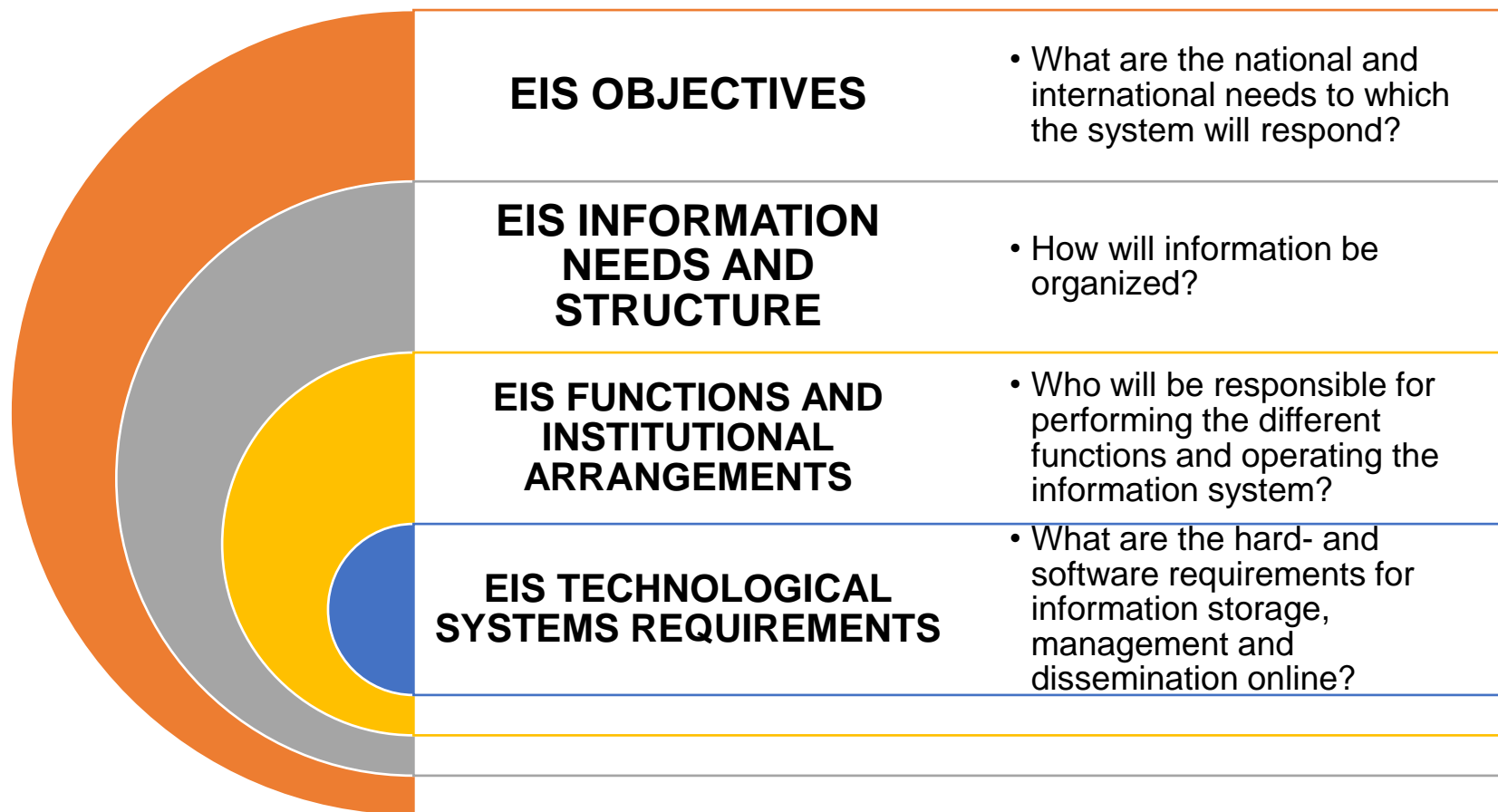
Each Party shall guarantee that environmental information systems are duly organized, accessible to all persons and made progressively available through information technology and georeferenced media, where appropriate.

Benefits of an EIS:



- (1) Provide the country with a **comprehensive platform to access data**, which will allow integrated planning, impact assessments and risk analysis
- (2) **Display information publicly** on a range of interests to support policy and decision-making dialogues on environmental management, social and economic issues; and facilitate public and special interest group validation at the national to international scales.
- (3) **Identify trends** (e.g., levels of pollution, population, waste disposal, uptake of renewable energy etc.) that can be categorized for prioritization of actions.
- (4) Serve as **one-stop-shop** and searchable portable **for information** that can be used to track areas of interests and develop strategies to minimize or mitigate negative trends.
- (5) **Facilitating reporting obligations; avoiding duplication; ensuring consistency; and cost-effectiveness**

Key Design Considerations



Adapted from UN-REDD+ Safeguards information systems: practical design considerations, Steve Swan and Judith Walcott, 2017



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Secretariat – Escazú Agreement
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<http://www.cepal.org/en/escazuagreement>

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