Recognizing the importance of urgent action to promote inclusive and effective environmental governance across Latin America and the Caribbean, and the crucial role of the Escazú Agreement in guiding these efforts, ParlAmericas in collaboration with Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA) convened parliamentarians, specialists, and representatives of civil society from the hemisphere to address parliamentary efforts on this agenda. Featuring a keynote presentation on the state of the Escazú Agreement’s implementation in the region, a panel discussion, and subsequent open dialogue, the session examined the role of parliaments in safeguarding the rights of access to information, participation, and justice in environmental matters as enshrined in the Agreement, including special emphasis on empowering women, youth, and marginalised communities to participate in environmental decision-making.

#ParlAmericasCC #EscazuAgreement

**THEMES:** Environmental governance, Human rights

**DATE:** July 11, 2023

**LOCATION:** Virtual

**PARTICIPANTS:** More than 70 parliamentarians, parliamentary staff, youth leaders, and representatives of civil society and multilateral organizations

**CO-ORGANIZER:** Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA)

Towards effective environmental governance: Access to information, participation, and justice

This activity aligned with SDGs 5, 10, 13, 15, 16, and 17.
MAIN TAKEAWAYS FROM THE MEETING:

- The Escazú Agreement presents the minimum standards that States must observe in order to fulfill the rights of access to information, participation, and justice in environmental matters, promoting a human-rights centred approach to environmental governance in the region.
- Through the Agreement, States are called to establish conditions that encourage public participation in environmental decision-making processes and that are adapted to the social, economic, cultural, geographical and gender characteristics of their national population. As representatives of their people, parliamentarians can be instrumental in applying an inclusive and participatory lens that facilitates broad and meaningful participation.
- It is essential that the public, especially youth, women, and members of communities particularly vulnerable to the effects of environmental degradation are empowered to participate in environmental decision-making, this includes ensuring sufficient notice is given and accessibility needs are considered ahead of public consultations on environmental projects.
- Taking into account the central role of justice for democratic strengthening as well as the specific provision of the Escazú Agreement to protect environmental human rights defenders, the most threatened of whom are women, farmers and Afro-descendant and Indigenous persons, it is imperative that the judicial system is adequately equipped to protect the people and address their petitions, through robust legal frameworks. For instance, parliaments can strengthen the judicial system's capacity to address socio-environmental disputes by incorporating environmental crimes in the penal codes.
### Participating Parliaments

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### Partner

Parliamentarians for Global Action
Parlamentarios para la Acción Global
Action Mondiale des Parlementaires
برلمانيون من أجل التحرك العالمي

This meeting was made possible with the generous support of the Government of Canada through Global Affairs Canada.
ParlAmericas is the institution that promotes **PARLIAMENTARY DIPLOMACY** in the **INTER-AMERICAN SYSTEM**

ParlAmericas mainstreams **GENDER EQUALITY** by advocating for women's political empowerment and the application of a gender lens in legislative work.

ParlAmericas works towards strengthening democracy and governance by accompanying **ELECTORAL PROCESSES**.

ParlAmericas is composed of the **35 NATIONAL LEGISLATURES** of the countries of North, Central and South America and the Caribbean.

ParlAmericas fosters **OPEN PARLIAMENTS** by advancing the principles of transparency, accountability, citizen participation, ethics and probity.

ParlAmericas organizes consultations and builds **MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS** with young leaders and civil society organizations.

ParlAmericas facilitates the exchange of parliamentary **GOOD PRACTICES** and promotes **COOPERATIVE POLITICAL DIALOGUE** in pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals.

ParlAmericas promotes policies and legislative measures to mitigate and adapt to the effects of **CLIMATE CHANGE**.

ParlAmericas is headquartered in **OTTAWA, CANADA**.

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