



PRESS RELEASE
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ParlAmericas participated in a Conference on Environmental Democracy hosted by Westminster Foundation for Democracy

On March 30, 2022, ParlAmericas participated in the Conference on Environmental Democracy hosted by Westminster Foundation for Democracy. Ms. Alisha Todd, Director General of ParlAmericas, moderated a panel session on “Participation in Decision-Making: Trends and Challenges”, which featured Member of the National Assembly Edison Broce (Panama); Ms. Birgitta Ohlsson, Director of Political Parties, National Democratic Institute (NDI); Ms. Hannah Mowat Campaigns Coordinator, Forest and Environment Resources Network (FERN); and Augustine B. Njamnshi, Executive Secretary of Bioresources Development and Conservation Programme Cameroon (BDCPC), Member of the Access Initiative and Member of the Board of the Pan African Climate Justice Alliance (PACJA).

The session explored how access to decision-making on environment and sustainability is working in the face of the climate crises, identifying trends and opportunities for innovation to facilitate the inclusion of environmental and democracy support organisations, movements, academics and interested citizens within decision-making processes. In addition, presentations were made showcasing the diverse cases on how this process works in different regions and frameworks (such as parliaments, political parties, regional institutions and civil society alliances) and the different challenges that still remain.

In her opening remarks for the session Ms. Alisha Todd offered her insights on the importance of promoting inclusive decision making processes: “If the pandemic and current world affairs have taught us anything, it is how interconnected our economic, social and environmental systems are and how we rely on each other to make effective decisions, and to ensure that decision making is inclusive and holistically works towards improving social welfare, building resilience, and ensuring that we meet our responsibility as current stewards of the planet to leave a clean and healthy world for future generations.”

-30-



During his intervention, Member of the National Assembly Edison Broce (Panama) reaffirmed the role of parliamentarians in strengthening democracy stating: "As parliamentarians we are the representatives of our communities, and therefore have the obligation to meaningfully consider the needs of our constituencies and ensure that their demands are rightly heard. One of the best ways to ensure that the needs and perspectives of all individuals are equitably considered is by putting participation at the heart of democratic strengthening, making certain that individuals are invited to meaningfully participate in the decision-making process."