SECOND MEETING OF THE NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONAL AGREEMENT ON ACCESS TO INFORMATION, PARTICIPATION AND JUSTICE IN ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (PRINCIPLE 10)

Panama City, 27-29 October 2015

Capacity-building workshop for interested public and civil society organizations on participation in international negotiations on environmental matters

Panama City, 26 October 2015

GENERAL INFORMATION
INTRODUCTION

The second meeting of the negotiating committee of the regional agreement on access to information, participation and justice in environmental matters in Latin America and the Caribbean (Principle 10) will be held in Panama City from 27 to 29 October 2015.

Prior to the meeting, a capacity-building workshop will be held for interested public and civil society organizations on participation in international negotiations on environmental matters (26 October 2015).

This document is intended to provide delegates with useful information to facilitate their work at the meeting.

The meeting coordinators will be available to answer any questions concerning logistical or organizational matters that you may wish to ask before or during the event.

1. General information on Panama

The Republic of Panama is located in the centre of the western hemisphere. It is bordered to the north by the Caribbean Sea, to the south by the Pacific Ocean, to the east by Colombia and to the west by Costa Rica.

According to the Office of the Comptroller-General of the Republic of Panama, the country has a total area of 74,117.3 square kilometres and a population of 3,787,511 people.

The Isthmus of Panama links Central and South America, and is 80 kilometres wide at its narrowest point.

Its capital is Panama City, which is located at the entrance of the Panama Canal. It is an international city thanks to its status as the country’s commercial, political and cultural capital.

Language

The official language is Spanish, although many Panamanians speak English.

Climate

Panama has a tropical climate and the temperature varies little year round. There are two well-defined seasons: the dry season, from mid-December to April, and the wet season, from May to mid-December. The average temperature is 27°C.
Useful information for your stay

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local currency</th>
<th>Balboa ($)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The official currency of the Republic of Panama is the balboa. However, the bank notes in circulation are United States dollars. Panamanian coins are of the same size and value as United States coins.</td>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local time</th>
<th>GMT-5.</th>
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<tr>
<td>The voltage is 110 volts nationwide.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Airport tax</th>
<th>An airport tax of US$ 40 is levied on international commercial flights departing from Panama.</th>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Tipping</th>
<th>Tips are not included in restaurant bills. It is customary to leave a tip of between 10% and 15% of the total bill.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| Taxis/private hire vehicles | There is a taxi stand near the airport exit, after customs. The 45-minute taxi ride from Tocumen Airport to Panama City costs around US$ 40. The official rate is US$ 10 per person if the taxi is shared by four passengers, US$ 14 per person if it is shared by two people and US$ 40 for a private taxi. There are also buses, but they do not stop near the terminal and the bus stop is a considerable walk from the airport. Taking the bus is not recommended. |

2. Venue

The second meeting of the negotiating committee of the regional agreement on access to information, participation and justice in environmental matters in Latin America and the Caribbean (Principle 10) and the capacity-building workshop for interested public and civil society organizations on participation in international negotiations on environmental matters will be held from 26 to 29 October 2015 at the Sheraton Panama Hotel.

The hotel’s contact details are:

**SHERATON PANAMA HOTEL & CONVENTION CENTER**

Address: Via Israel y Calle 77
San Francisco, Panama City

Telephone: (+507) 305 5100
Website: [http://www.sheratonpanama.com.pa](http://www.sheratonpanama.com.pa)

3. Meeting coordination

The meeting is being organized by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the Government of Panama, through the Ministry of the Environment.

Questions on substantive matters relating to the meeting may be addressed to Carlos de Miguel, Chief of the Policies for Sustainable Development Unit, and Valeria Torres, Economic Affairs Officer, Sustainable Development and Human Settlements Division of ECLAC ([principio10.lac@cepal.org](mailto:principio10.lac@cepal.org), (+56) 2 2210 2224 and (+56) 2 2210 2310).

Questions on logistical matters relating to the meeting may be addressed to María Paz Rivera ([mariapaz.rivera@cepal.org](mailto:mariapaz.rivera@cepal.org), (+56) 2 2210 2618).
4. Hotel reservations

The ECLAC Conference Services Unit has reserved a limited number of rooms at preferential rates at the following hotel:

- **SHERATON PANAMA HOTEL & CONVENTION CENTER (5*)**
  Vía Israel y Calle 77
  San Francisco

  Deluxe single room: US$ 130
  Deluxe double room: US$ 140

  These rates include buffet breakfast, free access to the fitness centre and Internet in the room. A 10% government tax must be added to that rate.

For reservations contact: Ingrid Aldeano

  ingreed.aldeano@nuevoshoteles.com
  (+507) 305 5172

  Reservations should be made directly with the hotel by 10 October 2015. After this date, the hotel reserves the right to change the rate and cannot guarantee the availability of rooms. Please use the form attached to make a reservation.

  Delegates are responsible for making their own reservation and are advised to make sure that their reservation has been processed by the hotel and to request a confirmation number or code.

  A credit card number is required to make the reservation. Hotels in Panama apply a “no show” policy: cardholders may cancel reservations up to 24 hours before they are due to check in, failing which they will be charged for the first night. All delegates must settle their own hotel bill at the end of their stay.

5. Entry requirements for Panama

  Participants are requested to ensure that they have with them, for review by the migration and security officials at Tocumen International Airport, a valid passport, their invitation to the event and the event programme.

  Proof of sufficient funds to cover your stay in Panama may be requested by the customs officials. The invitation letter from ECLAC should be sufficient, but please be advised that this process depends entirely on the migration authorities.

To enter Panama, visitors must provide the following documentation:

- A valid passport
- A return ticket and documents to enter the country of destination
• Visa or tourist card. Tourist visas can be obtained from Panamanian consulates abroad.

Information on which foreign nationals need tourist visas, “stamped visas” or tourist cards, and which are covered under the visa waiver arrangement, as well as the entry requirements for those nationals, is available at: http://www.migracion.gob.pa. The application form for the “stamped visa” is also available on that website.

To enter Panama, visitors must have been vaccinated against yellow fever at least 10 days before travelling.

6. Local transportation

Participants are responsible for their own transportation between the airport and the hotel. The Sheraton Panama Hotel & Convention Center is just 10 minutes from Tocumen International Airport.

7. Online and on-site registration of participants

From 14 September 2015, an online registration system will be available on the ECLAC website (http://www.cepal.org/en/topics/principle-10).

Registration of participants will take place from 8.00 a.m. on Monday, 26 October in the lobby of Chagres meeting room. Participants will be issued with identification badges, which, for security reasons, must be shown at all meetings.

For any questions on the registration of participants, please contact Paula Warnken (paula.warnken@cepal.org, (+56) 2 2210 2651) or Renata Briones (renata.briones@cepal.org, (+56) 2 2210 2637).

Registering through the online system does not exempt delegations from the requirement to provide official notification indicating the name of the head of delegation and all accompanying members.

8. Opening session

The meeting will begin at 9.30 a.m. on Tuesday, 27 October in Chagres meeting room of the Sheraton Panama Hotel & Convention Center.

9. Internet

Delegates will have wireless Internet access (Wi-Fi) in the offices and rooms set aside for the meeting.
10. Languages

The official language of the meeting will be Spanish. Simultaneous interpretation into English will be provided.

11. Medical services

The Government will provide first aid services in case emergency medical assistance is required at the meeting venue.

12. Documents

This will be a PaperSmart meeting. All official documents and statements will be available to view or download from the website of the meeting: http://negociacionp10.cepal.org/en. Participants are advised to bring a laptop, tablet or other mobile device, as there will be a limited number of paper documents available.
UNITED NATIONS
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HOTEL RESERVATION REQUEST FORM

First name: __________________________ Last name: __________________________

Head of delegation ☐ Delegate ☐ Observer ☐ Special guest ☐

Official title: __________________________

Organization or institution: __________________________

Address: __________________________

City: __________________________ Country: __________________________

Telephone: __________________________ Fax: __________________________ E-mail: __________________________

HOTEL DETAILS:

SHERATON PANAMA HOTEL & CONVENTION CENTER (5*)
Vía Israel y Calle 77
San Francisco
Tel.: (507) 305 5100

Group Code: “Grupo Cepal / Ministerio del Ambiente”

Contact: Ingreed Aldeano
ingreed.aldeano@nuevoshoteles.com

Deluxe single room ☐
US$ 130*

Deluxe double room ☐
US$ 140*

* A 10% Government tax must be added to these rates. Rates include breakfast and Internet access.

Date of arrival: __________________________ Flight No.: __________________________ Time (approx): __________________________

Date of departure: __________________________ Flight No.: __________________________ Time (approx): __________________________

I authorize the use of the following credit card to secure my reservation:

American Express ☐ MasterCard ☐ Visa ☐ Other ☐

Credit card No.: __________________________ Expiration date: __________________________

Reservations must be made directly with the hotel before 10 October. Delegates are responsible for making their own reservations and are advised to make sure that their reservation has been processed by the hotel and to request a confirmation number or code. To guarantee reservations, delegates are required to indicate their flight number, arrival and departure time in and from Panama, and their credit card details.