

## ➔ What is the Escazú Agreement?



The Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean is known as the Escazú Agreement.

The agreement takes its name from Escazú, Costa Rica, where in 2018 after 2 years of preparation and negotiation among the countries of the region, the Agreement was adopted.

## ➔ What are the benefits of the Escazú Agreement?



The Escazú Agreement is aimed at protecting the rights of present and future generations to live in a healthy environment.

The treaty aims to achieve the effective implementation of the rights to access environmental information as well as justice regarding environmental matters.

The treaty also aims to improve public participation in the environmental decision-making processes. Simply put, with the treaty in full effect, the environmental rights of the citizens will be better protected.

## ➔ What does the Escazú Agreement cover?



Key aspects of the Agreement are:

- I. Access to information and justice for citizens
  - Countries should create mechanisms to guarantee access to environmental information and establish entities to promote transparency in access to environmental information
  - People may not push for environmental justice because they are not equipped with the necessary knowledge and resources to access the justice system.
- II. Public participation in environmental decision making
  - The authorities should identify citizens that will be directly impacted by projects, and activities that will likely have an impact on the environment and health and promote measures of public participation in the process
  - Efforts should be made to involve people or groups in vulnerable situations in a timely, active and effective manner of the environmental decisions that will affect them and remove barriers to their participation in the decision making.
  - The public should be informed about environmental decisions, the authorities involved and the procedure for public participation and requesting information.
  - The public should be informed about the reasons and grounds for the decisions taken and how their comments were taken into account.
- III. Create and strengthen the capacities of authorities, public officials and citizens on environmental access rights
  - Promote education, training and awareness of environmental access rights
  - Acknowledge the importance of civil society organizations and other relevant groups in the environmental decision-making process

# FAQ'S - THE ESCAZÚ AGREEMENT (CONT'D)

## ➔ How does the treaty benefit me?



- The Escazú Agreement benefits you because it takes environmental sustainability to the grassroots. You will actively participate in protecting Jamaica's land, water, air and natural resources.
  - The treaty means that Jamaicans can enjoy healthier and sustainable lives as the government and decision-makers will pay more attention to aspects of environmental sustainability that may currently be ignored
  - The treaty encourages community efforts towards environmental sustainability. This means that the citizens will be better empowered to preserve their natural resources and natural heritage.
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## ➔ Why should the government ratify the Escazú Agreement?



The Escazú Agreement will come into effect on April 22nd, 2021, International Earth Day.

The Jamaican government should ratify the treaty now to show that it is ready for full implementation.

Without the ratification of the agreement in any country, its citizenry cannot benefit from the protection the treaty offers.

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