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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)

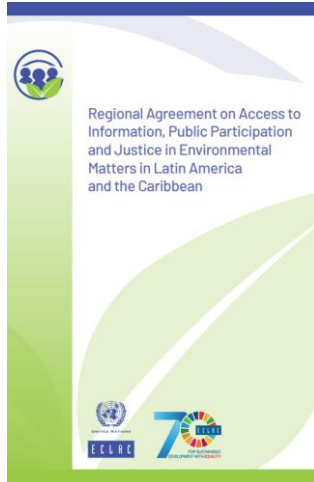
David Barrio Lamarche

Sustainable Development and Human Settlements Division

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, 28 June 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 have already signatories

13 ratifications

(OECS: Antigua and Barbuda, Guyana, **Saint Vincent and the Grenadines**, Saint Kitts and Nevis, **Saint Lucia**)

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



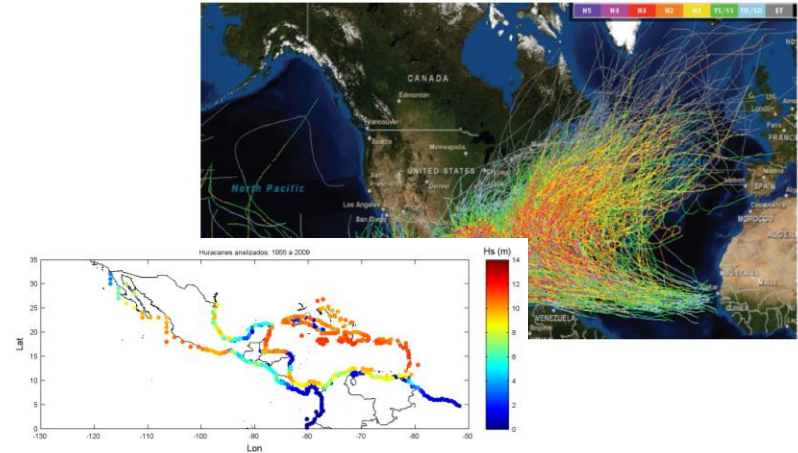


Underlying basis of the Escazú Agreement



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

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



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



In accordance with the principle of maximum disclosure

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

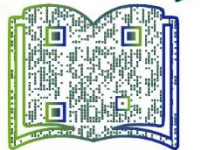


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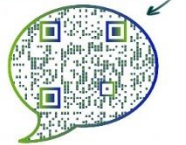
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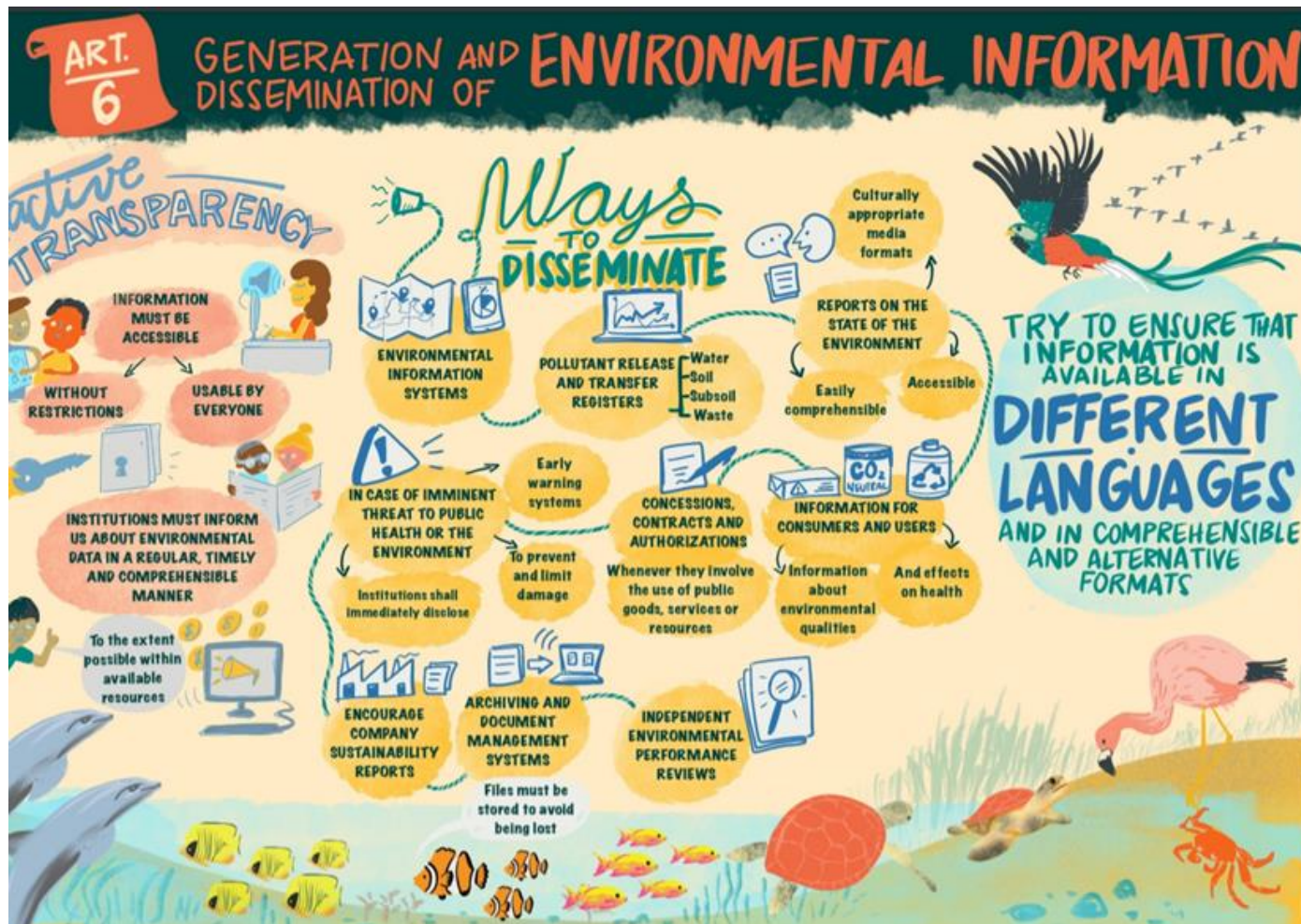


GET TO KNOW THE OBSERVATORY



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Environmental information



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READ THE AGREEMENT



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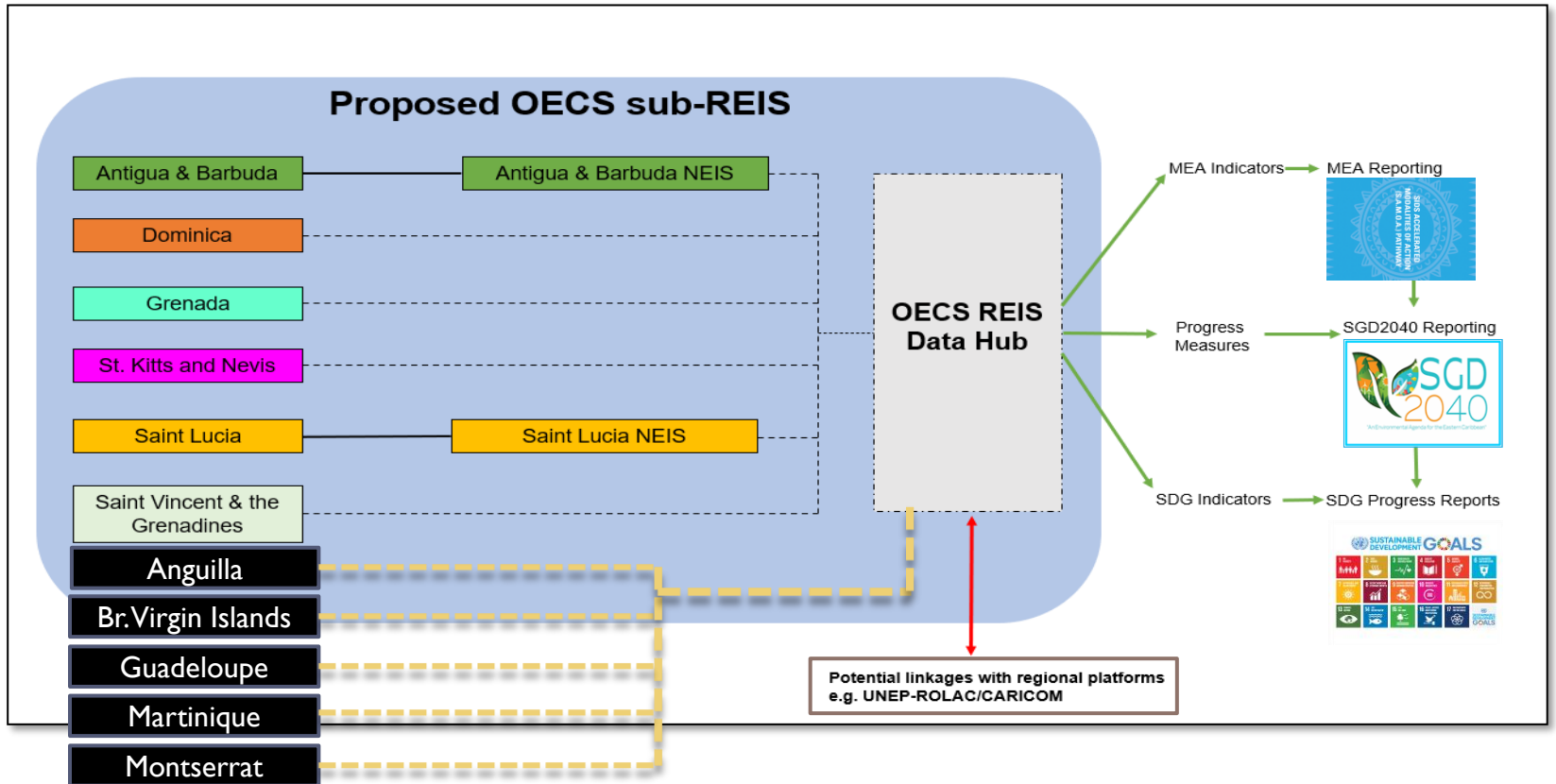
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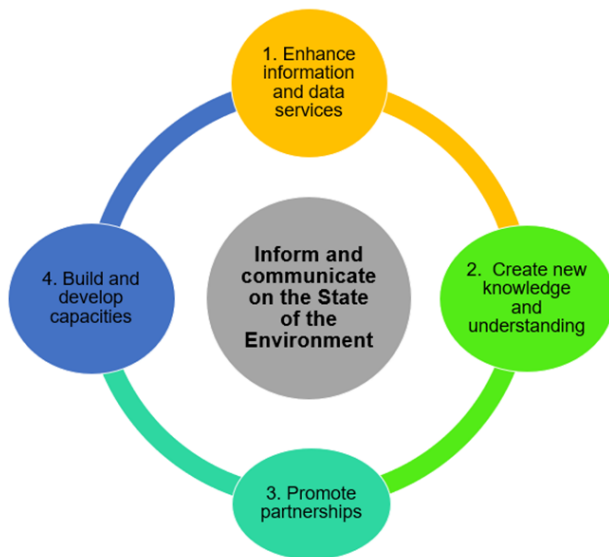
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OECS EIS Structure

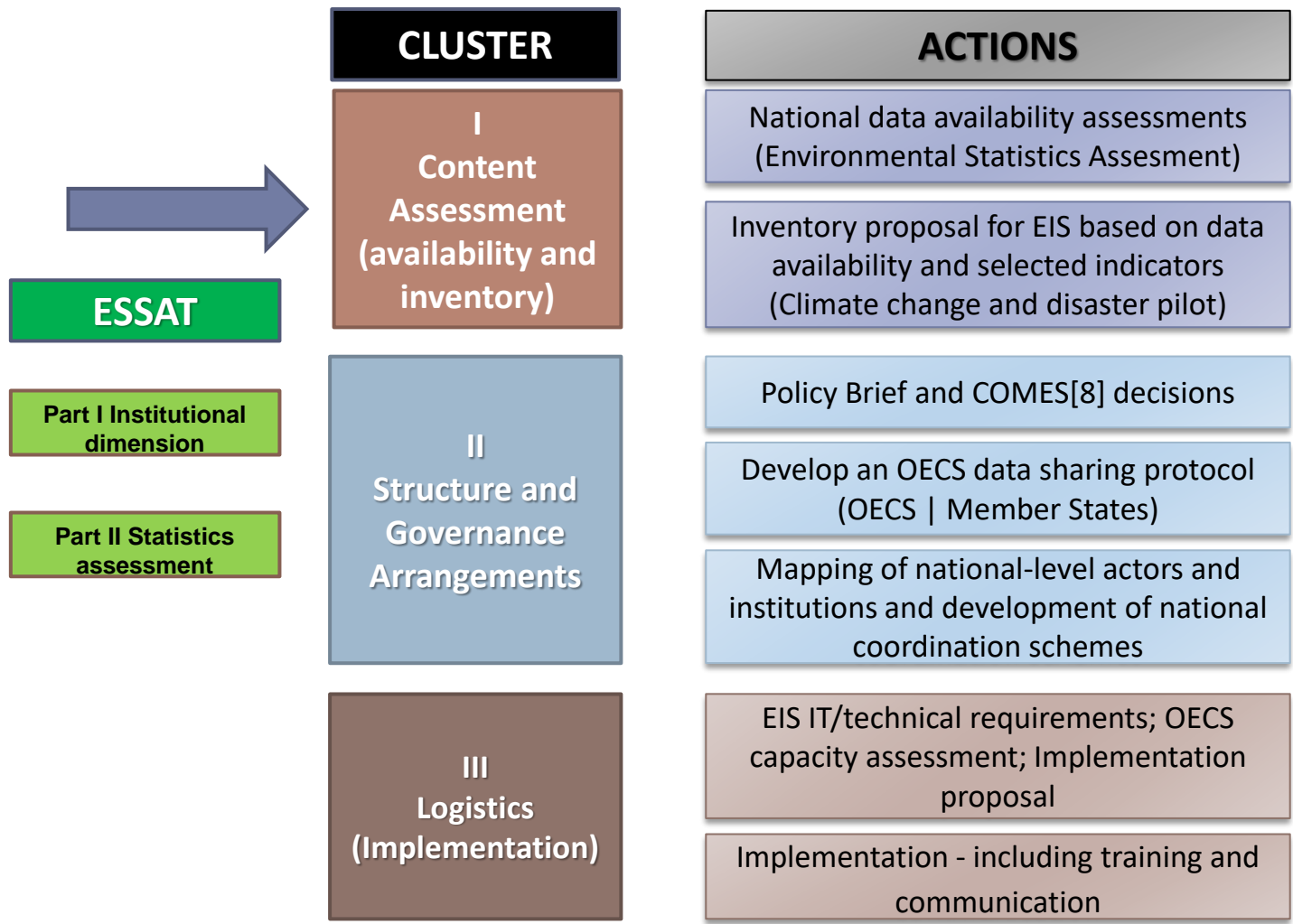


Benefits of an EIS:



- (1) Provide the OECS region with a **comprehensive platform to access data**, which will allow integrated planning, impact assessments and risk analysis for national and regional development.
- (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**

OECS endorsed road map for an EIS



Cluster I: Content Assessment with national counterparts – Steps

Previous diagnosis & workshop preparation

Work along with the country to fill up the self-diagnosis of availability of environmental data (Global Set + ESSAT)

Coordinate with the Focal Point for logistics of virtual workshop

- Statistic Office
- Environmental Authority

Live workshops and exercises

Targeted audience (producers and users): NSO, Ministries, Environmental Authorities, Disaster Risk Reduction/ Emergency authorities, sectoral authorities, universities, research centers, and private sector

3 days of Workshop (3 hours per day)

Based on initial self-diagnosis

Methodological presentations on statistical techniques. Practical exercises / Group works - Build indicators / Develop methodological sheets

Participants receive a certificate

Follow-up activities

Review the methodological sheets of the indicators built during the Workshop, and provide feedback

Develop a report where the availability of national information is evaluated and synthesized

Strengthened further indicators selected by the country



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<http://www.cepal.org/en/escazuagreement>

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