



PRESS RELEASE

The First Escazú Champion Revealed Ahead of Important Environmental Meeting in Costa Rica

San José, October 12, 2019.- On October 10, 2019, the last day of the [Pre COP 25](#) (Preparatory meeting for the Conference of Parties – COP of the United Nations Climate Change Convention – UNCCC) sessions held in San José, Costa Rica, Dr. David Boyd, United Nations Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and the Environment was revealed as the first Escazú Champion. Escazú Champions is an initiative of the Government of Costa Rica and [The Access Initiative](#), with the support of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UN ECLAC) which is the Technical Secretariat for the Escazú Agreement. The aim is to create an informal group of champions who agree to contribute their voice and passion to conduct outreach to increase awareness of the importance and benefits of the [Escazú Agreement](#) for the region and to promote the ratification and effective implementation of the Agreement. Champions will include governments, civil society representatives, activists, academics, multilateral organizations, indigenous and youth leaders among others.

According to Dr. David Boyd, “It’s absolutely an enormous honor to be the first Champion of the Escazú Agreement. This is a globally important treaty for the 33 countries of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). It’s a treaty that guarantees the right to a healthy environment and provides citizens with all the tools they need to enjoy that right. We are living in a time in human history when we’re in the midst of the first global environmental crisis, so there has never been a more important time for these (LAC) countries to sign, ratify and immediately begin the implementation of the Escazú Agreement, the time is now!”

The event was attended by representatives of the Government of Costa Rica such as the Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs and Worship, the Executive Secretary of UN ECLAC, representatives of the Regional Public Mechanism, participants attending Pre COP 25 and members of The Access Initiative - a civil society network in 60 countries around

the world promoting environmental democracy supported by the World Resources Institute as its Secretariat.

Following the launch of the Escazú Champions was the First Meeting of the Signatory Countries to the Escazú Agreement. The aim of the meeting held from October 11th - 12th in Costa Rica was to share the actions taken at the national level by the signatory countries and civil society as well as activities carried out by the Technical Secretariat. Also on the agenda was matters to be addressed at the first Conference of the Parties (COP), such as the rules of procedure of the COP, including the modalities for significant participation by the public (article 15.4); the rules relating to the structure and functions of the committee to support implementation and compliance (article 18); the financial provisions that are necessary for the functioning and implementation of the Agreement (articles 14 and 15.4b) and discussion of strategies and alternatives to achieve early entry into force and implementation of the Escazú Agreement.

The Escazú Agreement is the first regional treaty promoting access to information, public participation and access to justice in environmental matters, with a focus on human rights and the protection of environmental defenders. To date, twenty-one countries have signed the Agreement and six have ratified it. Countries willing to be a part of this transformative process can simply contact ECLAC at principio10.lac@cepal.com.

The Escazú Agreement is a treaty for the people, by the people, so every citizen in Latin America and the Caribbean should sign up to ECLAC's Regional Public Mechanism to stay abreast of the process: <https://www.cepal.org/en/suscribe-regional-public-mechanism>.

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