



II Inter-American Meeting of Ministers
and High-Level Authorities on
Sustainable Development
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic



Organization of
American States

Hemispheric VIRTUAL CONSULTATION FORUM

Dear Sir/Madam,

The Department of Sustainable Development (DSD) of the Organization of American States (OAS) in cooperation with the Summit of the Americas Secretariat would like to invite you to participate in the Virtual Consultation Forum with Civil Society Organizations and other social actors. The forum is being organized as part of the preparatory process for the Second Inter-American Meeting of Ministers and High-Level Authorities on Sustainable Development to be held in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic in November 2010.

Since the First Inter-American Meeting of Ministers and High-Level Authorities on Sustainable Development in 2006, OAS Member States have been working with the DSD in a focused and clear cooperative agenda inspired by the Declaration of Santa Cruz + 10 and the Inter-American Program on Sustainable Development.

The Second Inter-American Meeting of Ministers and High-Level Authorities on Sustainable Development will identify and advance concrete partnerships at the regional and hemispheric level to integrate environmental considerations into development, poverty alleviation, social and economic policies.

The Virtual Consultation Forum is scheduled to begin September 15 and will end October 15, 2010. This virtual forum has been created to facilitate discussion on five issues under the umbrella theme "Towards Sustainable Development in the Americas": (1) Follow up on the Declaration of Santa Cruz + 10, (2) Implementation of the Inter-American Program on Sustainable Development (2006-2009), (3) Vulnerability in the Context of Sustainable Development; (4) Risk Management and Planning; and (5) Institutional and Management Aspects related to Climate Change.

The objectives of the virtual forum are:

1. Gather input from civil society organizations and other social actors for the preparation of the Draft Declaration.
2. Build consensus among forum participants and obtain recommendations and follow-up activities on the theme and the agenda to be considered during the Ministerial Meeting.
3. Benefit from the exchange of successful initiatives and best practices, including advocacy efforts by civil society and work on the Ministerial theme to be analyzed during the meeting

Comments and recommendations resulting from the Virtual Forum are vital to Member States as they move forward in discussions regarding the Draft Declaration and in preparation for the Second Ministerial Meeting. To this end, recommendations will be compiled in reports that will be presented to Government Representatives. The Declaration of Santa Domingo will be presented during the Second Inter-American Meeting of Ministers and High-Level Authorities on Sustainable Development to be considered for discussion and approval.

Please visit the Summits Virtual Community (SVC) at www.summit-americas.org/svc or the DSD website at www.oas.org/dsd/ and follow the link to access to the virtual consultation forum. In the SVC you will also find tutorial videos on how to participate in the community, with instructions on the process to create your account, participate in forums or groups, and upload content such as documents, photos and videos.



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In addition, a discussion document will be posted on the virtual community in order to provide a common starting point for all participants, which will be complemented by several background documents for a more in-depth look at the Meeting. The forum will be available in English and Spanish and participants are welcome to provide comments or questions in either language. Please keep in mind that translations will not be provided and that the forum moderators will reply in the language comments or questions are posted.

Without a doubt, this forum will contribute to strengthen the links among governments, international organizations, civil society organizations and other social actors, which is why we believe that your participation is fundamental. Finally, it is also part of the follow-up activities of the Fifth Summit of the Americas and a starting point for the Sixth Summit in 2012.

We thank you in advance and look forward to your participation in this forum.

Sincerely,

Cletus Springer
Director
Department of Sustainable Development