



PUBLIC STATEMENT

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“Securing the Right to Environmental Information in a Digital World”

We, the **Information Commissioners** and Information Regulators, members of the International Conference of Information Commissioners (ICIC), gathered in Berlin for the 16th Edition of our Annual Conference, issue the following Statement:

Affirming the foundational principles of the Johannesburg Charter and our joint commitment to the universality of access to information (ATI) that empowers individuals, strengthens democracy, and fosters responsive and transparent governance;

Recognizing the urgent need to guarantee timely, and equitable access to environmental information, especially in the context of the climate crisis, environmental degradation, and growing public demands for participation in environmental decision-making;

Recalling the legal obligations embedded in key international instruments such as the Aarhus Convention and the Escazú Agreement, and the global commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly Target 16.10 on public access to information and protection of fundamental freedoms;

Stressing the opportunity and responsibility that digital technologies bring to transform public access to environmental information, while acknowledging that such transformation must be accompanied by safeguards for inclusion, data ethics, privacy, and digital equity;

Upholding the following principles that guide our work and vision:

- **Transparency** as a proactive and ongoing obligation to disclose information in accessible, understandable, and reusable formats;
- **Accountability** as the duty of public institutions to justify decisions and enable public oversight;

- **Inclusiveness** as the commitment to ensure that all individuals, regardless of background or circumstance, can access and use public information;
- **Openness** as a cultural and institutional value that promotes participatory governance, open data, and engagement with the public and civil society;
- **Integrity and Independence** as fundamental conditions for information commissioners and regulatory bodies to perform their functions effectively and free from external influence;
- **Collaboration** as a driver for peer learning, joint initiatives, and global solidarity in advancing access to information.

We, the ICIC members, hereby:

1. Support the consolidation and strengthening of independent information regulators globally, including legal guarantees for autonomy, sufficient resources, and modern tools to enforce transparency in both analog and digital environments.
2. Reaffirm the right to access environmental information as a foundation of sustainable development, public health, climate justice, and effective governance.
3. Call on governments to adopt and enforce robust ATI legal frameworks that guarantee disclosure of environmental data, including emissions, pollution levels, permits, environmental impact assessments, and climate adaptation plans.
4. Promote regional and international collaboration to exchange best practices, address shared environmental challenges, and foster harmonized digital approaches to transparency.
5. Empower civil society, media, and academia as key actors in driving demand for environmental information and holding institutions accountable.
6. Commit to strengthening ICIC's role as a global platform for dialogue, cooperation, and action on environmental transparency and digital transformation.
7. Ensure that access to information is equally guaranteed to all people in situation of vulnerability and that relevant mechanisms are put in place to achieve this, using the Berlin Guidelines for the Promotion of the Right to Information, as a reference.
8. Encourage the adoption of *transparency-by-design* in digital services and platforms, integrating openness, accessibility, and accountability from the earliest stages of system design and policymaking.
9. Recognize the good practices implemented by ICIC members, including the integration of e-governance tools for transparency.

10. Adopt and endorse the Berlin Principles on the Protection and Promotion of Access to Information to support and strengthen Information Commissioners in their vital role of monitoring and implementing access to information laws.
11. Express our willingness to develop a global model structure for proactive information disclosure, providing a publication scheme that can serve to all our members to effectively fulfill their functions in their jurisdictions in terms of proactive disclosure.

Commissioners collectively commit to securing the independent oversight of the right to access information. As guardians of the right to information, we remain united in our resolve to make openness the default and transparency the norm. Access to environmental information in the digital age is essential, not only for legal compliance but also for public empowerment, climate resilience, and the preservation of our shared planet.