



International Day for Universal Access to Information 2025

Theme: *Ensuring Access to Environmental Information in the Digital Age*

Date: 29-30 September 2025

Location: Manila, the Republic of the Philippines

Venue: Hilton Hotel in Manila (TBC)

28 September

19:00 – 21:00 Welcome Reception (Exclusive for International Delegates)

29 September

8:30 - 09:00 | Registration

09:00 – 09:30 | Opening Ceremony moderated by Ms Ida H. Pangan, Master of Ceremonies (Philippines)

- Opening Remarks by Dave M. Gomez, Acting Secretary of the Presidential Communications Office
- Keynote Speaker - H.E. Mr Nararya Soeprapto, ASEAN Deputy Secretary-General for Community and Corporate Affairs (Indonesia)
- Video Message from Mr Aidan Eyakuze, CEO, Open Government Partnership (OGP)

Cultural Performance: Video Trailer (2 minutes)

09:30 – 11:00 | High-Level Panel | A Decade of the Paris Agreement: Evaluating the Right to Environmental Information for a Sustainable Future

Description: The panel reflects on a decade of the Paris Agreement, focusing on how policies that guarantee access to environmental information strengthen regional cooperation, disaster preparedness, and climate action, advancing sustainable development and environmental justice.

Moderator: Mr Tawfik Jelassi, Assistant Director-General (UNESCO)

Speakers:

- Mr Noralene M. Uy, Ph.D, Assistant Secretary for Policy, Planning, International Affairs and Climate Change of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (Philippines)
- Hon. Siromi Turaga, Attorney General and Minister for Justice (Fiji)
- H.E. Mr. Nik Nazmi Nik Ahmad, Minister of Natural Resources and Environmental Sustainability (Malaysia) TBC

- Ms Iordanca-Rodica Iordanov, Chair of the Aarhus Convention Task Force on Access to Information and former Minister of Environment (Republic of Moldova)

Rapporteur: Ms Taria Turtia, Programme Specialist, (UNESCO)

11:00 – 11:30 | Coffee Break

11:30 – 12:45 | Panel 1: Incorporating Access to Big Data into Access to Information Laws

Description: This panel examines how legal frameworks can be adapted to incorporate big data, striking a balance between openness and privacy, as well as interoperability and ethical use. It is organised with the International Conference of Information Commissioners.

Moderator: Ms Ana Lomtadze, CI Advisor, (UNESCO)

Speakers:

- Mr Ibrahim Shaw, Information Commissioner (Sierra Leone)
- Ms Elizabeth Tydd, Information Commissioner, (Australia)
- Mr Charles Dulo, Ombudsman, The Commission on Administrative Justice (Kenya)
- Ms Ruth Abigail Sestoso, Undersecretary for Administration, Finance, GOCCs (Philippines) TBC

Rapporteur: Ms Ingrid Mondet, Consultant, (UNESCO) CI/UAI

12:45– 13:45 | Lunch Break

13:45 – 15:00 | Panel 2: The Role of Intergovernmental Organisations and Regional Conventions in Promoting Access to Environmental Information

Description: The two panels will discuss different international standards-setting instruments, such as the Escazú Agreement & the Aarhus Convention, OECD and UNESCAP policies and the ATI Model Law for Small Island Developing States, aimed at strengthening the right to information on the regional level.

A. Regional Frameworks in Action: Escazú, Aarhus, and Beyond Moderator: Mr Gilbert Sendugwa, Executive Director, African Freedom of Information Centre (Uganda) Speakers: • Ms Patricia Madrigal Cordero, Chair CSIC-Escazú Agreement (Costa Rica) • Ms Pansy Tlakula, Information and Privacy Commissioner (South Africa) • Ms Noriko Okubo, Co-leader of the Green Access Project, Osaka University (Japan) • Ms Marie Whelan, Policy Analyst, Innovative, Digital & Open Government Division (OECD) • Mr Manuel Castillo, Environmental Affairs Officer, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) Rapporteur: Ms Ma'aly Hazzaz, CI Advisor (UNESCO)	B. Small Islands, Big Challenges: Environmental Information for Climate Resilience Moderator: Mr. Ramon Tuazon, Secretary General, Asian Media Information and Communication Centre (Philippines) Speakers: • Ms Elizabeth Tydd, Information Commissioner (Australia) • Mr Ahmed Ahid Rasheed, Information Commissioner (Maldives) • Ms Josephine Joseph, Assistant AG, FSM Department of Justice (Micronesia) • Mr Toby Mendel, Executive Director, Centre for Law and Democracy (Canada) Rapporteur: Ms Rocelle Ago, Assistant Commissioner, RTI Commission (Australia)
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15:00 – 16:00 | Panel 3: The UN System and Multilateral Coordination for Environmental Transparency

Description: The panel will examine how the UN system and the international community encourage the promotion of access to environmental information

Moderator: Ms Maki Katsuno-Hayashikawa, Director and Representative, UNESCO Office for Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Timor-Leste and Liaison to ASEAN (UNESCO)

Speakers:

- Mr Arnaud Peral, UN Resident Coordinator in the Philippines (United Nations)
- Mr Hao Zhang, UN Resident Coordinator in the Maldives (United Nations)
- Mr Bakhodir Burkhanov, UN Resident Coordinator (Laos) TBC
- H.E. Ms Saija Nurminen, Finnish Ambassador to the Republic of the Philippines
- Mr Dmytro Shlapachenko, UN Resident Coordinator in Turkmenistan (United Nations)

Rapporteur: Ms Ana Lomtadze, CI Advisor (UNESCO)

16:00 – 16:15 | Coffee Break

16:15 – 17:15 | Panel 4: (UNESCO) Initiatives for Information on Climate Change

Description: A presentation of (UNESCO)'s new initiatives, such as the Global Initiative for Information on Climate Change and the Global Roadmap for Information as a Public Good in the Face of the Environmental Crisis, will discuss efforts to combat misinformation, promote the integrity of environmental information, and uphold information as a public good.

Moderator: Ms Taria Turtia, Programme Specialist (UNESCO)

Speakers:

- H.E. Mr Raúl Fernandez Daza, Ambassador to France, Permanent Delegate of the Republic of Chile to UNESCO, Chair of the IPDC Council and Bureau (Chile)
- H.E. Mr Gilberto Fonseca Guimarães de Moura, Ambassador of Brazil in the Philippines (Brazil) TBC
- Ms Imelda Abano, Environmental journalist and a media trainer (Philippines)
- Ms Heather Ford, Professor, University of Technology Sydney (Australia)
- Ms Vieira Zevonia, Chair of the Timor-Leste Association of Journalists (Timor-Leste)

19:00 – 22:00 Cultural Night and Dinner (Open for All)

30 September

9:00 – 9:15 | Opening Session moderated by Ms Ida H. Pangan, Master of Ceremonies (Philippines)

- Keynote Speaker: Mr Ricardo C. Pérez Manrique, Judge, Inter-American Court of Human Rights (Uruguay) - video

9:15 – 9:45 | Fire Side Chat: (UNESCO)/CLD Global Information Request Initiative

- Mr Guilherme Canela, Director, Division for Digital Inclusion Policies, Digital Transformation (UNESCO)
- Mr Toby Mendel, Executive Director, Centre for Law and Democracy (Canada)

9:45 – 10:45 | Panel 5: Open Government for Environmental Information: Building Trust through Transparency

Description: The panel highlights how the Open Government Partnership is leveraging open data, transparency, and public participation on climate and environmental issues by showcasing concrete examples from OGP action plans and reform efforts.

Organised with the Open Government Partnership

Moderator: Ms Swati Mehta, Regional Lead for Asia and the Pacific, Open Government Partnership (India)

Speakers:

- Ms Cielo Magno, President, Bantay Kita/Publish What You Pay Philippines and OGP Steering Committee Co-Chair, (Philippines)
- Mr Secretary Robert Borje, Executive Director, Philippines Climate Change Commission (Philippines)
- Mr Raynaldo Sembiring, Executive Director, Indonesian Centre for Environmental Law (Indonesia)

Rapporteur: Ms Nikka Mae Loreto, Project Coordinator (UNESCO)

10:45 – 11:00 Coffee Break

11:00 – 12:15 | Panel 6: Access to Environmental Information – Regional Perspectives

Description: Two breakaway panels explore how cutting-edge digital technologies and big data analytics impact access to information and transparency in environmental issues.

C. Modernising Legal Frameworks for the Digital Revolution in South & South East Asia Moderator: Ms Ma'aly Hazzaz, CI Advisor (UNESCO) Speakers: • Ms Kishali Pinto, Information Commissioner (Sri Lanka)	D. Digital Tools and Big Data for Environmental Transparency in Africa, organised with the African Alliance for Access to Data Moderator: Ms Dube Hlengiwe, Project Manager, Centre for Human Rights (South Africa) Speakers:
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• Mr Hanafi Ahmad, Executive Director, Indonesian Parliamentary Centre (Indonesia) • Mr Ritwick Dutta, Managing Trustee, Legal Initiative for Forest and Environment (India) • Ms Sara Hossain, Executive Director, Bangladesh Legal Aid Services Trust (Bangladesh) • Mr Kristian R. Ablan, Assistant Secretary, Department of Trade and Industry (Philippines) Rapporteur: Ms Nikka Mae Loreto, Project Coordinator (UNESCO)	• Ms Pria Chetty, Executive Director of Research ICT Africa (South Africa) • Mr Stephen Moore, Founder and Director of the Centre for Artificial Intelligence Research Ghana (CAIRG) (Ghana) • Mr Izak Minnaar, Convenor of the Access to Information Committee of the National Editors Forum (South Africa) • Mr Amine El Mezouaghi, Director General, Digital Development Agency (Morocco) Rapporteur: Ms Ingrid Mondet, Consultant (UNESCO)
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12:15 – 13:30 | Panel 7: Civil Societies' Role in Promoting Access to Environmental Information

Description: Civil society and media representatives share best practices in advocating for the right to access environmental information, promoting accountability and participation.

E. Youth and Civil Society: Educating the Next Generation Moderator: Ms Anjali Bhardwaj, Co-convenor, National Campaign for People's RTI (India) Speakers: • Mr Anurag Deep, Digital Pedagogy Designer, MGIEP Transforming Education (UNESCO) – online • Ms Malou C. Mangahas, Co-Convenor, Right to Know Now Coalition (Philippines) • Mr Kunda Dixit, Chief Editor of the Nepali Times (Nepal) • Mr Yuri Lemana, Convenor, Youth Alliance of FOI (Philippines) • Mr Joseph Francisco Ortega, Chair and CEO, National Youth Commission (Philippines) Rapporteur: Ms Ma'aly Hazzaz, CI Advisor (UNESCO)	F. The Role of Civil Society in Promoting Access to Environmental Information, organised with the Freedom of Information Advocates Network. Moderator: Mr Nepomuceno Malaluan, Co-Convenor, Right to Know, Right Now (Philippines) Speakers: • Mr Alexander Kashumov, Executive Director, Access to Information Program (Bulgaria) • Mr Bruno Schimitt Morassutti, Co-founder and Advocacy Director at Fiquem Sabendo (Brazil) • Ms Sarah Wesonga, Senior Program Manager, Article19 - Eastern Africa (Kenya) Rapporteur: Ms Ana Lomtadze, CI Advisor (UNESCO)
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13:30 – 14:00 | Closing Session

Closing remarks and Endorsement of the 2025 IDUAI Statement “Commitment to Agenda 2030 and Access to Environmental Information in the Asia-Pacific Region” by Mr Guilherme Canela, Director, Division for Digital Inclusion Policies and Digital Transformation and Mr Marius Lukosiunas, CI Advisor (UNESCO)

14:00 – 15:00 Lunch

15:00 – 19:00 Cultural Tour (Exclusive for International Delegates, upon Host Country confirmation)