



U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

NEWS RELEASE

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EPA's Environmental Justice Advisory Council to Hold First-Ever Meeting in Puerto Rico

Public invited to join the discussion on environmental justice issues

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NEW YORK (July 19, 2023) - For the first time in its 30-year history, the National Environmental Justice Advisory Council (NEJAC), a federal advisory committee to the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), will meet in Puerto Rico. The NEJAC provides advice and recommendations about broad, cross-cutting issues related to environmental justice and provides a valuable forum for discussions about integrating environmental justice with other EPA priorities and initiatives.

"EPA is committed to continue to build on the progress since Administrator Regan's visit to Puerto Rico for the Journey to Justice Tour last year. This is why I am so pleased that this year's NEJAC meeting is being hosted in San Juan, Puerto Rico, to highlight and bring more attention to the many environmental justice issues in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. I encourage people to join us either in person or virtually," **said Lisa F. Garcia, EPA Regional Administrator.** "The NEJAC provides critical independent advice to help keep EPA accountable to ensuring that everyone gets the same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards, and equal access to the decision-making process."

Here are some key details about the meeting:

- The public meeting will take place from Tuesday, July 25 to Thursday, July 27, 2023.
- The meeting will be held at The Sheraton Hotel at the Puerto Rico Convention Center (200 Convention Blvd., San Juan, PR 00907)
- The meeting will have a virtual option for those who cannot attend in person.
- The meeting is free and open to all members of the public.
- Registration is required **online by 11:59 p.m., EST, July 19** or **on-site at the Sheraton Hotel** throughout the public meeting.
- To register for the meeting, [please visit this link](#). Accommodation or interpretation requests can be filled out in the Zoom registration link.

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- Registered participants will have an opportunity to provide oral or written comments if they sign up by the start of the public comment session, which begins on Wednesday, July 26 at 4:00 p.m. EST.

On Wednesday, July 26, there will be a Puerto Rico Community Panel and a US Virgin Islands Community Panel that will highlight many of the environmental justice challenges faced in the US Caribbean.

- Panelists for the Puerto Rico Community Presentations and Panel include: **Juan Rosario (AMANESER)**, **Brenda Torres** (San Juan Bay Estuary Program), **Ruth “Tata” Santiago** (Diálogo Ambiental and Queremos Sol), **Ingrid Vila** (Cambio PR and Generación Circular), **Carmen Villanueva** (Puerto Rico por el Derecho de una Vivienda Digna), **Miriam Matos** (Organización Acueductos Comunitarios Non-PRASA), **Mario Nuñez** (Proyecto ENLACE del Caño Martin Peña) and **Lucy Cruz** (Group of the 8 Communities of the Caño Martin Peña).
- The USVI Community Panel will be represented by **Deanna James** (St. Croix Foundation for Community Development), **Franelle Gerard** (Crucian Heritage and Nature Tourism, Inc. (CHANT)), and **Jennifer Valiulis** (St. Croix Environmental Association).

Visit EPA’s website about the [National Environmental Justice Advisory Council to learn more](#).

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23-061