



Latin American and Caribbean Days 2021

(Information and programme, 16 April 2021)

Since 2018, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia, within the Bled Strategic Forum, has been organizing **Latin American and Caribbean Days international conference** ("LAC Days"), aimed at strengthening bilateral and bi-regional cooperation with the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. The LAC Days also foster mutual understanding and cooperation among businesses, institutions and public from both sides

The 2021 LAC Days are to take place in the week between 19 and 23 April 2021 in virtual format due to the pandemic. The conference will be divided in several parts addressing economic, sector specific (environment & science), and cultural issues.

This year, the traditional high-level panel "Opportunities of the EU-LAC Cooperation", devoted to bilateral and bi-regional cooperation and the collaboration in international organizations and joint initiatives, will be adapted to the circumstances of pandemic. We invited foreign ministers from a set of EU and LAC countries to share their views and visions of bi-regional relations in short video messages.

Economic discussions will focus on existing opportunities and offer an insight into possible cooperation between Slovenia and LAC countries (i.e. presentation of business environment, opportunities and the companies with interest and/or experience in the region) as well as explore possible synergies between Slovenian and LAC business partners. One of the panel discussions will address good practices in circular economy.

In sector-specific panels, the possibilities of cooperation in facing environmental challenges of common concern, especially in sustainable water management, and in other areas of science and research will be discussed – with particular focus on green





transition and digital transformation, cooperation between research institutions and researchers from Slovenia and LAC countries as well as the EU and LAC, including the possible role of European programmes (e.g. Horizon Europe). We are very pleased to partner with Bavarian Research Alliance (BayFOR) once again to organize one of the panels on science and research collaboration.

In another important cooperation with the **EU-LAC Foundation**, the **12th Reflection Forum on "Contributions of the bi-regional strategic partnership to shaping greener recovery"** will take place on 19 and 20 April 2021, back-to-back with the 2021 LAC Days. (Participation at the Forum discussions is by invitation only.)

Several cultural events will enrich the LAC Days programme. The 2021 LAC Days will also benefit from strong representation of EU institutions, research centres and associations, science and academia, the business community, culture, the diplomatic corps, and politics.

Slovenia looks forward to the participation of LAC representatives at the 2021 LAC Days and to their active contribution in discussions.

The topics addressed in the LAC Days panels already reflect the agenda of Slovenia's Presidency of the Council of the EU in the second half of 2021.

Given the prominence of environmental, socio-economical, cultural issues in the LAC countries and in the 2021 LAC Days agenda, we expect lively discussions that will strengthen and create new synergies for an even stronger cooperation in the future.

Please find enclosed a draft Programme of the 2021 LAC Days.

The working language of the LAC Days Conference is English.

For registration to the panels, latest programme and other LAC Days information, please follow:

www.facebook.com/BledStrategicForum

3rd Latin American and Caribbean Days (LAC Days)

Ljubljana, 19–23 April 2021 (in virtual form)





(Draft Programme, 16 April 2021)

Monday, 19 April 2021

- 16.00–18.30 **Reflection Forum »Contributions of the bi-regional strategic Partnership to shaping greener recovery«** in cooperation with the International EU-LAC Foundation
Welcoming remarks,
Session 1: *»Lessons learned and capacities to implement green recovery actions«*
(by invitation only)

Tuesday, 20 April 2021

- 16.00–18.30 **Reflection Forum »Contributions of the bi-regional strategic partnership to shaping greener recovery«** in cooperation with the international EU-LAC Foundation
Session 2: *»Strengthening the role of international cooperation in addressing Climate Change«* (by invitation only)
- 18.00–19.00 **Opening of the exhibition »La Doctora«** about the Slovenian-Paraguayan anthropologist and researcher Dr Branislava Sušnik, at the Slovene Ethnographic Museum (virtual), followed by a new documentary film on Dr Branislava Sušnik
<https://www.etno-muzej.si/sl/dogodki/doctora-zivljenje-in-delo-slovenske-znanstvenice-v-paragvaju-odprtje-razstave>, and
<https://youtu.be/XtuRaTGlyHU>

Wednesday, 21 April 2021

- 15.45–16.00 **Welcoming remarks:**
Mag. Anita Pipan, Ambassador, Director-General, Directorate for Multilateral Affairs and Development Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia

Marjeta Jager, Deputy Director General, Directorate General for International Partnerships, European Commission
- 16.00–18.00 **Session I: Circular economy – Good practices from both regions**
will address: Circular journey 2020/21 – key milestones and the role of national circular networks; Research and innovation in the core of circular transformation; Challenges of circular leaders of change in business environment;
with: Linnet Solway, Eurochile, Chile, Beatriz Luz, Exchange4Change, Brazil, Dr. Dragica Marinič, ŠGZ - SRIP Circular Economy, Slovenia, Dr. Andrej Kržan & Dr. Uroš Novak – National Institute of Chemistry, Slovenia, Dr. Mojca Pobrežnik, IOS, Slovenia, Recycling company from Brazil, Tjaša Ban, Plastika





Skaza, Slovenia, Tina Mavrič, Aquafil, Slovenia, Shoe producer, Chile (TBC), Company from Brazil (TBC), DG INTPA - circular economy (TBC), moderated by Ladeja Godina Košir, Chair of the Coordination Group of the *European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform (ECESP)* & Executive Director *Circular Change Institute for Circular Economy*

Latin and European. Big and small. Both circular. We are going to explore different dimensions of circular transition from the perspective of national networks, researchers and innovators as well as of business leaders. Climate and health crisis are two parts of the same coin – how are they influencing everyday decision-making process on different levels? How can different stakeholders contribute to the implementation of highly ambitious “global green agenda” and what is the role of network governance? Let’s see how the “plastics challenge” is addressed in different contexts and how is systemic approach enabling connectivity of key transitional points within countries as well as globally.

18.00–20.00 Session II: **Integrated water management in changing climate**

will address: Integrated water management in changing climate, Experience in integrated water management in LAC, Transboundary water management cooperation in the Sava River Basin, Problems with cyanobacteria in surface waters and early detection of toxic representatives, Nature based solutions for circular management of resources in cities, Team Europe Initiative: proposals for LAC region (Green transition), Škocjanski zatok: from degraded area to water nature reserve;

with: Dr. Barbara Čenčur Cerk, Faculty of natural science and engineering, University of Ljubljana; president of Global Water Partnership Slovenia, Dr. Alex Guerra, Climate Change Institute, Guatemala, Samo Grošelj, International Sava River Basin Commission, Slovenia, Dr. Tina Eleršek, National Institute of Biology, Slovenia, Dr. Nataša Atanasova, Faculty of Civil and Geodetic Engineering, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia, Horst Pilger, Head of Sector Regional Programmes Latin America, DG INTPA, EC, Borut Mozetič and Bojana Lipej, DOPPS – BirdLife Slovenia, moderated by mag. Alenka Mubi Zalaznik

Integrated water management is a comprehensive process. Institutional setting, national legislation, pursuit of good practices and constant adaptation to change best describes the process of integrated water management. However, it is the people that counts: the communities, practitioners and policy makers who work jointly for success. The process is influenced by climate change and coordinated action for maximum sustainability of vital ecosystems and community welfare is necessary.

Thursday, 22 April 2021

16.00–19.00 Session I: **Forum on Bi-regional Economic Cooperation**

16.00-16.15 Welcoming remarks and Presentation of economic cooperation of Slovenia with LAC countries

Mag. Iztok Grmek, Ambassador, Director General, Directorate for Economic and Public Diplomacy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia





Forum will include presentations of some Slovenian companies, their experience, as well as presentation of Chambers of Commerce, Agencies, also economic environment of some LAC countries,
with: Ambassadors of Brazil, Mexico and Paraguay, Directors or high representatives of *Medex, Roto, Duol, Cetis*, Dewesoft and Arex companies, Slovene Enterprise Fund, SLOBRAZ Chamber of Commerce Slovenia Brazil, Slovenian Global Business Network, Sao Paulo and Mexican Businesses Council for Foreign Trade, Investment and Technology (COMCE), EURACEN Chamber of commerce Europe-Central America, Invest and international Commercial Agency of Argentina, Invest Chile,
moderated by Anita Mlakar, public relations and communication consultant

19.00-21.00 Session II: **EU and LAC: Twin transition, Missions and Citizen science**

with: Dr. Gregor Anderluh, Director of National Institute of Chemistry, Slovenia, Dr. Andreja Kutnar, Innorenew, COE, Slovenia, John Shawe-Taylor, Director & UNESCO chair in AI, International Research Centre of Artificial Intelligence under the auspices of UNESCO, dr. Rudi Panjtar, Institut Jožef Stefan, SRIP Factories of the Future (TBC), Dr. Mateja Grego, National Institute of Biology, Marine Biology Station Piran, Karolina Schlegel, Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, Daniel Kiapes, DG Research & Innovation, Unit F1, International Cooperation - Europe, Americas and thematic coherence, Marc LITVINE, Senior Expert -Head of Sector, DG INTPA,
moderated by mag Peter Volasko, Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, Head of Science Directorate, **HORIZON EUROPE Strategic PC Member – SI, BG JRC Member – SI, ERAC Deputy Member – SI.**

The most pressing challenge, responsibility and opportunity for Europe and the world is keeping our planet and people healthy. This is the defining task of our time. The increase in global temperature, the depletion of natural resources and continued biodiversity loss, together with increasing forest fires, floods and other natural disasters undermine our security and prosperity. The European Green Deal is one of the responses. It will drive us forward to climate neutrality by 2050 and at the same time focus on adaptation. It will help protect and preserve the biodiversity, the natural heritage and the oceans that bring so much wealth to our Union. And it will do so by making our economy and industry more innovative, resource efficient, circular and competitive. The European Green Deal is a new European growth strategy. It will help create jobs and make Europe more competitive globally. Our new industrial strategy will be essential in making this happen as an enabler of both the ecological and digital transitions.

The digital transition is already having a significant impact on every aspect of our lives and careers. It opens up new opportunities to connect, communicate, solve societal issues and do business. The European Union has all the assets to make the most of this transformation. It must move first on the future technologies with the most potential, while ensuring the European approach is human, ethical and values-based.

We will discuss some of these aspects of Twin transition, Missions and Citizen Science, which are connected features of the renewed European Research Area and





the EU policy priorities as well. And of course, also highlight are there the opportunities for the strengthened cooperation between EU and LAC...

Friday, 23 April 2021

16.00–18.30 Session I: **Horizon Europe: An opportunity for a strengthened cooperation between the EU and LAC**

with: mag Darija Valančič and Petra Žagar, Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, Science Directorate and Dr. Thomas Ammerl, Head of Unit Environment, Energy & Bioeconomy, Bavarian Research Alliance, (BayFOR) Munich, Germany,
moderated by mag Darija Valančič

Activities during the whole week:

- Video addresses by high representatives from countries of both regions on the challenges of EU-LAC cooperation.
- Documentary films addressing environmental science, anthropology topics from countries of both regions will be available on the virtual platform.

Others:

- Presentation of books with the translation of Slovene and Paraguayan fairy tales (first printed in both countries in 2021), time tbc.

