

Insights



Evelyn Sheehan to Amelia Rueda: Latin America is the Global Anticorruption Enforcement Risk Capital

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Recent scandals in Costa Rica – namely operations *Diamante* and *Cochinilla* – have brought corruption to the forefront of the public in the region. Together with renewed efforts by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) to combat corruption in Latin America, individuals and companies there now find themselves located in the global risk capital for anticorruption and compliance enforcement. Evelyn Sheehan, a former U.S. federal prosecutor who oversaw international corruption and bribery investigations, examined the latest developments when she sat down with renowned Costa Rican journalist Amelia Rueda for a Spanish-language radio interview.

Ms. Sheehan looked at the capacity building by U.S. prosecutors and agents that is strengthening its enforcement efforts. These include recently created whistleblower program and funding for local counterparts in Latin America. The new administration's commitment to anticorruption efforts, particularly in the region, is also expected to increase enforcement risks for individuals and companies there – over 60% of Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA) actions brought or announced in 2020 alleged misconduct in Central and South America.

Ms. Sheehan also examined how authorities in Costa Rica in particular have room to improve their enforcement capabilities, but also emphasized the importance of due process as well when dealing with corruption. This means ensuring the criminal justice system cannot be weaponized by those in power by defending the independence of judges and prosecutors. When decisions in corruption cases are wholly based on the evidence, public cynicism can be avoided.

[Click here to listen to the whole interview \(in Spanish\).](#)