



Call for Papers

The Legitimate Role(s) of Human Rights Courts in Environmental Disputes

The Center of Excellence “PluriCourts” at the University of Oslo, Faculty of Law, is organizing an international symposium on the legitimate role(s) of Human Rights courts and tribunal in adjudicating environmental disputes in Oslo, 8 and 9 September 2014.

The relationship between environmental protection and human rights has been of interest to scholars and legal practitioners for quite some time. Recently, an increasing number of cases concerning environmental issues are being heard before international human rights courts and tribunals including the European Court of Human Rights, the Inter-American Commission and Inter-American Court of Human Rights, and the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights. Matters concern the effects of environmental degradation and pollution, climate change, indigenous peoples environmental rights, an independent right to a healthy environment – just to name a few.

But are human rights courts prepared for such cases? Do they have the expertise to deal with environmental matters? Are rules on jurisdiction, procedures, evidence etc. adequate when confronted with the complexities of environmental issues? What is the role of environmental law before human rights courts and tribunals? Are human rights courts effective “instruments” for environmental protection? Are human rights courts more suitable for protection of some environmental problems than others, for example local rather than global challenges? What are the legitimate roles, functions and effects of human rights courts in cases concerning the environment.

This symposium will inquire these and other questions of legitimacy of human rights courts and tribunals when hearing “environmental cases” in the context of human rights protection.

The list of experts invited to speak at the symposium includes: Dinah Shelton, Professor of Law, George Washington University; Dan Magraw, President emeritus, Center for International Environmental Law, John Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies; Alan Boyle, Professor of Law, University of Edinburgh; Judge Margarette May Macaulay, Inter-American Court of Human Rights; and Judge Hellen Keller, European Court of Human Rights.

We invite for papers to be presented and discussed at the symposium. Please send your abstract (word limit 500 words) to christina.voigt@jus.uio.no. Deadline is 1 May 2014. Notification of acceptance will be given in the beginning of June 2014. We aim at publishing 5-6 selected papers in the *Journal of Human Rights and the Environment*.

Contact: Professor Christina Voigt, coordinator for the environmental sector of PluriCourts (christina.voigt@jus.uio.no or: 0047-228-50246 (office)).



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