

# Searching for Critical Environmental Law: Theories, Methods, Critiques

CALL FOR PAPERS

WORKSHOP, MAY 11, 2018 IN OXFORD

CO-ORGANIZED BY ANDREAS KOTSAKIS, OXFORD BROOKES UNIVERSITY

& VITO DE LUCIA, UIT ARCTIC UNIVERSITY OF NORWAY

The field of critical environmental law has yet to develop any consistent self-awareness as a set of problematisations, methods and theories of either law or the environment, despite promising work in recent years<sup>1</sup>. With this realisation as the point of departure, the aim of this workshop is to debate the conception and role of this field of legal scholarship. Critical environmental law is understood as an enquiry into the theoretical and institutional apparatus of both environmental law and the rationality of environmentalism. It seeks to problematize standard ontological, epistemological and axiological narratives from an interdisciplinary perspective, and to find and expose the slippages at the margins of the intersection between law and ecology.

However, any conceptual or practical project of critical environmental law must now contend with our contemporary condition; the continuing crisis of capitalism framing a period of protestations, uprisings and revolts, a general discontent in the context of which the operation of an objective, depoliticised and scientifically-derived environmental law as an essential element of liberal environmentalism appears increasingly strained. But was it ever effective in the first place? On the other hand, critiques of environmental science can serve projects that are inimical to the political commitments of critical thought. How can critiques of the limitations of liberal and managerial notions of environmental law thrive in the world of denialism and extremism? In this context, the fields of international, transnational and comparative environmental law have become even more important in combating the geographically restricted nature of environmental law scholarship.

Therefore, this call for papers invites contributions that grapple with the challenge of conceiving and critiquing the relation between law and the environment through innovative ideas, categories and instruments, and in the contemporary context of crisis and contestation. Contributions from international, transnational, comparative or domestic perspective are welcome. Possible themes include, but are not restricted to:

- ❖ What is critical environmental law? What can it be? What are its methodological commitments and ethical orientations?
- ❖ What are the limits – conceptual, political, practical – of environmental law?
- ❖ Relation between environmental law and resistance

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<sup>1</sup> Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, Andreas, ed. *Law and Ecology: New Environmental Legal Foundations*, (Routledge 2011); Otomo, Yoriko, and Ed Mussawir, eds. *Law and the Question of the Animal: A Critical Jurisprudence*, (Routledge 2013); Thomas-Pellicer, Ruth, Vito De Lucia, and Sian Sullivan, eds. *Contributions to Law, Philosophy and Ecology* (Routledge, 2016).

- ❖ Relation between environmental law and science
- ❖ Critical readings of the law in/on the Anthropocene
- ❖ Critical thought and the environment
- ❖ Evaluating Earth jurisprudence/wild law approaches
- ❖ Transnational and comparative approaches to environmental law
- ❖ What is the specific dimension of critical international environmental law?

Please send abstracts of 500 words to Andreas Kotsakis – [akotsakis@brookes.ac.uk](mailto:akotsakis@brookes.ac.uk) and Vito De Lucia – [vito.delucia@uit.no](mailto:vito.delucia@uit.no) by April 3, 2018. *Limited funding is available for travel and accommodation in Oxford.* We will communicate decisions on the workshop by April 8, 2018.