

RULE
OF
LAW
FOR
NATURE



Oslo, 9-11 May 2012

INVITATION AND CALL FOR PAPERS



UiO • Faculty of Law
University of Oslo



Environmental Law Conference in Oslo, Norway, 9.-11. May 2012

“Rule of Law for Nature”

Basic Issues and New Developments in Environmental Law

The year 2012 marks a number of watershed points in international environmental affairs: The 40th anniversary of the adoption of the Stockholm Declaration, the 30th anniversary of the UN World Charter for Nature and the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, the 25th anniversary of the Brundtland Report, and the 20th anniversary of both the Rio Declaration, Agenda 21, and the UNCED Conventions: the Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity.

In June 2012 world leaders will gather once again in Rio de Janeiro for the Earth Summit 2012 to secure renewed political commitment to the global agenda of sustainable development.

This is an appropriate point in time for reflection on the legal status of nature, how environmental goods and services are valued and taken into account in decision-making, and the implications of the rule of law in this respect.

While the rule of law generally is used with regard to citizens’ rights, this conference aims to explore the application of the rule of law to environmental protection, and its implications. How can the legal protection of the natural environment be strengthened? This also opens for reflections on the temporal and geographical extension of the rule of law.

The conference aims at analysing these basic issues of international and national environmental law and looking at new trends in this area of law.





Issues to be addressed include:

- the legal status of nature and the environment in national and international law, including ideas of rights of and legal standing for natural objects,
- how ecosystem services and other natural goods are assessed and valued in Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) and Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEA), in cost-benefit analyses, and when balanced against other objectives and interests in decision-making,
- development and application of the ecosystem approach as a legal instrument, and of such evolving legal mechanisms and principles as safeguards, biodiversity targets, and environmental integrity ,
- procedural issues such as representation of nature, and of environmental interests in general, as well as burden of proof in administrative procedures and before the courts,
- how the interests of future generations are taken properly into account and may be strengthened,
- trends in international law towards a general obligation for states to protect essential ecosystems,
- the role of ethics in environmental protection.

These and other issues may be explored in relation to nature and biodiversity in general, or as applied to the protection and management of such spheres as forests, the ocean, the atmosphere/climate, etc.

This will be a most welcome occasion for analysing new trends in environmental law and discussing which legal tools work and which do not and why? Where can existing laws evolve, adapt and improve? And where do we have to think afresh? Which innovative approaches and mechanisms are being adopted or under discussion and what would be their 'comparative advantages'?





The three day conference will gather experts in environmental law from different parts of the world and legal cultures. It will combine presentations of invited speakers and papers that are accepted on the basis of scientific quality.

The conference is organised by the Natural Resources Law Group at the Faculty of Law, University of Oslo, chaired by professor Hans Christian Bugge. The venue is the Norwegian Academy of Science, in the heart of Oslo.

The organisers aim to cover the costs of travel and stay for invited speakers and those participants whose paper is approved for presentation. The presentations will be published in a conference report/book.

Abstracts, registration and inquiries should be addressed to the Conference Secretary,

Henrik V. Heussche - h.v.heussche@jus.uio.no

Telephone: (+47) 22 85 97 48

**The Natural Resources Law Group
University of Oslo
P.O.Box 6706 St. Olavs plass
N-0130 Oslo**

**Deadline for presentation of
paper abstract:**

November 1st 2011

**Final approval of papers
and conference
programme:**

December 31st 2011

Deadline for Registration:

April 1st 2012

