



*Cambridge Centre for Environment, Energy and Natural Resource Governance (C-EENRG, University of Cambridge)*

*ESIL Interest Group on International Criminal Justice*

*ESIL Interest Group on International Health Law*

*Grotius Centre for International Legal Studies (Leiden University)*

*Platform on International Energy Governance*

### ***Online Conference***

## **‘The Health-Environment Nexus and the Systemic Implications of Environmental Crimes’**

**Friday, 19 November 2021**

**[17h-19h CET]**

The ESIL Interest Group on International Criminal Justice and the Cambridge Centre for Environment, Energy and Natural Resource Governance (‘C-EENRG’, University of Cambridge) are pleased to welcome scholars and practitioners to the online conference titled ‘The Health-Environment Nexus and the Systemic Implications of Environmental Crimes’, which will take place on Zoom on 19 November 2021. The conference is organized in collaboration with the ESIL IG on International Health law, the Grotius Centre for International Legal Studies (Leiden University) and the Platform on International Energy Governance.

Human health and well-being are intimately linked to the state of the environment. Clean air, a stable climate, adequate water, sanitation and hygiene, safe use of chemicals, protection from radiation, healthy and safe workplaces, sound agricultural practices, health-supportive cities and built environments, and a well-preserved nature are all prerequisites for good health. Environmental risks to health include environmental physical, chemical, biological and work-related factors external to a person, and all related behaviours. Climate change is increasing the frequency and intensity of heatwaves, droughts, extreme rainfall and severe cyclones in many areas, and modifying the transmission of food-borne, water-borne and zoonotic infectious diseases, resulting in large impacts on health. Moreover, current approaches to environment-related risks fell short to efficiently mitigate such risks, to impact sustainability and, importantly, to examine the complex interaction between environment, climate change and health from an international legal perspective. The conference intends to address the question on how to bridge the nexus between health, environment and climate change and to critically discuss the role of international law and institutions as well as of political cooperation in building such a nexus.

Moreover, natural resources are key components of many economies with a growing share in world trade. Natural resources-related illegal trade involves the illicit trafficking of resources such as fuels and minerals as well as wildlife, forestry and fishery. Environmental crimes encompass a broad range of illicit activities, with the highest-profile area of illegal natural resource trade being the trafficking of wildlife. The uneven distribution of natural resources and their illicit trading can considerably affect human health, the ecosystem, biodiversity as well as sustainable development. The lucrative illicit trafficking of natural resources attracts non-state armed groups, terrorists and transnational organized criminal groups, who are increasingly engaged in environmental crimes, thus undermining

and threatening peace, security and development. This raises questions on the role, scope and effectiveness of international criminal and transnational law to constrain such activities. Whereas some scholars (notably those in law and criminology) have focused on illegal wildlife trade activity and the prevention thereof, as well as, more recently, on the legal definition of the crime of ‘ecocide’, others (including conservation and social scientists) have adopted a broader perspective, trying to better understand the complex links between illegal wildlife trade and its negative impacts on biodiversity and society.

The aim of the conference is to discuss the above issues and also provide a platform to debate the outcome of the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference, also known as COP26, which will be held in Glasgow from 1 to 12 November 2021 under the presidency of the United Kingdom. More specific topics of discussion include, but are not limited to:

1. Environmental health protection and current approaches to environmental risks;
2. Protection of a health supportive environment and the role of international law and international institutions;
3. Prevention of environmental health risks and international law;
4. Climate change and its impacts on human health;
5. Illicit trafficking of natural resources as an emerging international threat;
6. Connections of illicit trafficking of natural resources with other serious crimes, such as counterfeiting, corruption, money laundering, and the role played by different actors, such as non-state actors and of transnational criminal organizations;
7. Implications of illicit trafficking of natural resources on human health, including COVID-19;
8. Implications of illicit trafficking of natural resources on biodiversity and ecosystems;
9. Human security challenges and global inequalities derived from the illicit trafficking of natural resources;
10. Flaws and gaps within existing environmental law vis-à-vis current and emerging environmental crimes;
11. The recent draft law providing a legal definition of ‘ecocide’ and the way forward (from both a legal and institutional perspective);
12. Coordination of criminal and environmental legislation and ways to further international cooperation to improve detection and prosecution of environmental crimes;
13. Case studies from different countries or regions to identify trends, patterns and modalities of intervention to improve investigations and prevention, and better exchange information across borders;

Those interested in attending the online event should register by sending an email to [esiligici@gmail.com](mailto:esiligici@gmail.com), providing their name and institution, **by 18 November 2021**. A Zoom link will be circulated to those registered shortly before the event.

## **Programme**

### **I. 17h-17.15 Introduction and Opening Address**

**Professor Jorge E Viñuales**

Harold Samuel Professor of Law and Environmental Policy, *University of Cambridge*, and Founder and Former Director of C-EENRG

**Dr Leslie-Anne Duvic**

Senior Lecturer in Environmental Law, The Dickson Poon School of Law, *King's College London*, and Project Leader, Platform on International Energy Governance

### **II. 17.15-18h: The Health-Environment Nexus: Framing the debate**

**Chair: Professor Gian Luca Burci**

Adjunct Professor of International Health Law, *Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies*, and former WHO Legal Counsel from 2005 to 2016

**Dr Alexandra L. Phelan**

Assistant Professor of Global Health Law, *Georgetown University* (Department of Microbiology and Immunology; Georgetown University Law Center)

**Professor Makane Mbengue**

Professor of International Law, *University of Geneva*, and Director of the Department of International Law and International Organization

**Dr Tlaleng Mofokeng**

UN Special Rapporteur on the right to physical and mental health

### **III. 18h00-18h45 Systemic Implications of Environmental Crimes**

**Chair: Dr Ginevra Le Moli**

Assistant Professor of Public International Law, *Leiden University*, and Fellow at C-EENRG

**Mr John Scanlon**

CEO, Elephant Protection Initiative Foundation, and Former Secretary-General of CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) from 2010 to 2018

**Professor Tanya Wyatt**

Professor of Criminology, *Northumbria University*

**Professor Darryl Robinson**

Professor of International Criminal Law, *Queen's University*, Faculty of Law (Canada)

### **IV. 18h45-19h: Q&A Session**