

BOTH ENDS' INFORMATION NEWSLETTER # 2 -2004 ENVIRONMENTAL LAW ORGANISATIONS

The information in the Information Newsletters is based on data from Both ENDS' database of organisation profiles. Maintenance of the database is part of Both ENDS' ongoing service to environmental organisations in the South, the countries of Central and (South) Eastern Europe, as well as the Newly Independent States.

Environmental Law Organisations

Introduction

Environmental Laws are laws that have been enacted to handle both the problems of pollution and degradation of the environment as well as to protect nature and biological diversity. Because of the global importance of environmental issues, these laws must transcend national boundaries (and are therefore international in scope) and encompass every aspect of environmental policy. Related to environmental law is the concept of Environmental Justice. This is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, colour, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. The focus of this Information Newsletter is on International Organisations that specialize in Environmental Law, including several Regional and Special Interest organisations.

Justification

When attempting to determine the boundaries of (international) environmental law, one finds that no clear definition can be applied. Environmental law is interdisciplinary, intersecting and overlapping with numerous other areas, including economics, political science, ecology, human rights, indigenous rights and navigation/admiralty. Especially the link between human rights and environmental protection has become increasingly clear in recent years. Environmental damage is often worse in countries and in areas with human rights abuses. Where human rights are weak, civil society groups are not able to raise environmental concerns effectively. Rights of association, access to justice, access to information and freedom of expression are critical for the success of a country's environmental and human rights movements. Therefore a forthcoming Information Newsletter will concentrate on Human Rights Organisations.

INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL)

The Center for International Environmental Law is a non-profit organization working to use international law and institutions to protect the global environment, promote human health while promoting sustainable development, and ensure a just and sustainable society. CIEL provides a wide range of services including legal counsel, policy research, analysis, advocacy, education, training, and capacity building.

CIEL's goals are: to solve environmental problems and promote sustainable societies through the use of law; to incorporate fundamental principles of ecology and justice into international law; to strengthen national environmental law systems and support public interest movements around the world; and to educate and train public-interest-minded environmental lawyers.

CIEL's program areas include Climate Change, Biodiversity and Wildlife, Biotechnology, Trade and Sustainable Development, International Financial Institutions, Law and Communities, Persistent Organic Pollutants and Human Rights and the Environment.

CIEL's work covers more than sixty countries on six continents, with emphasis on the Western Hemisphere, Central and Eastern Europe and the Newly Independent States, Asia and Africa.

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Centre for International Sustainable Development Law (CISDL)

The mission of the Centre for International Sustainable Development Law (CISDL) is to promote sustainable societies and the protection of ecosystems by advancing the understanding, development and implementation of international sustainable development law.

The CISDL is engaged in six primary areas of sustainable development law research (each of which is led by a CISDL Lead Counsel based at a developing or developed country law faculty or international organisation). These areas are: Trade, investment and competition law; Sustainable developments in natural resources law; Biodiversity law; Climate change and vulnerability law; Human rights and poverty eradication in sustainable development law; and Health in sustainable development law.

CISDL's objectives are to: advance ISDL scholarship through research and analysis; build capacity, education and experience in ISDL; support the development and implementation of stronger ISDL; promote ISDL networks and knowledge dissemination; and strengthen the CISDL as an institution.

The CISDL hosts academic workshops, dialogue sessions, legal expert panels parallel to international negotiations, law courses and seminar series, and conferences to further its legal research agenda. It provides instructors, lecturers and capacity-building materials for developing country governments and international organisations in national and international law in the field of sustainable development, and works with countries to develop national laws to implement international treaties in these areas.

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Website: <http://www.cisdl.org>

E-LAW - Environmental Law Alliance Worldwide

The Environmental Law Alliance Worldwide gives public interest lawyers and scientists around the world the skills and resources they need to protect the environment through law. E-LAW advocates serve low-income communities around the world, helping citizens strengthen and enforce laws to protect themselves and their communities from toxic pollution and environmental degradation. E-LAW advocates are building a sustainable future by helping citizens participate in decisions about the environment. By giving grassroots advocates access to critical legal and scientific resources, E-LAW strengthens these advocates to challenge environmental abuses and pursue environmental justice. Now, more than 300 grassroots lawyers and scientists in 60 countries call on the E-LAW network for critical legal and scientific tools.

E-LAW is collaborating with grassroots advocates all over the world to meet this challenge. Local advocates hold the key to changing the way we make decisions about the environment. These lawyers, working in their home countries, are the most effective advocates for the environment. They know the law, politics, and threats to the environment in their countries. In addition to giving local advocates the legal and scientific tools they need, E-LAW: strengthens organizations, provides equipment, and builds skills; hosts visiting fellows; reaches out to more advocates; builds networks; protects the human rights of public interest lawyers; and provides legal and scientific resources by topic and region.

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Earthjustice Legal Defense Fund

Founded in 1971 as Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund Earthjustice is a non-profit public interest law firm dedicated to protecting the environment, natural resources, and wildlife of this earth and to defending the right of all people to a healthy environment. Earthjustice brings about far-reaching change by enforcing and strengthening environmental laws on behalf of hundreds of organizations and communities. Earthjustice works through the courts to safeguard public lands, national forests, parks, and wilderness areas; to reduce air and water pollution; to prevent toxic contamination; and to preserve endangered species and wildlife habitat.

Earthjustice's International Program addresses trade and the environment, human rights and the environment, and helps build environmental law in other countries. Earthjustice also runs an environmental law clinic at Stanford University, training students in public interest environmental law and increasing our service to organizations throughout the country.

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Environmental Law Network International (ELNI)

The Environmental Law Network International is a network of about 350 individuals and organisations that share an interest in environmental law. ELNI coordinates a number of different activities to facilitate the communication and contact of those interested in environmental law around the world. ELNI provides an international forum for the exchange of news, views ideas and experiences in environmental law and in so doing promotes international communication and cooperation of those working in this field.

ELNI conferences and foras are a core element of the network. They provide scientific input and the possibility for discussion on a relevant subject of environmental law and policy for international experts. The aim is to bring together scientists, policy makers and young researches, giving the opportunity to exchange views and information as well as developing new perspectives.

Further ELNI publishes a series of books entitled "Publications of the Environmental Law Network International".

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FIELD - Foundation for International Environmental Law and Development

FIELD is a NGO bringing together public international lawyers committed to the promotion of environmental protection and sustainable development through law. The vision of FIELD is a fair, effective and accessible system of international law that protects the global environment and promotes sustainable development. Its mission is to apply and progressively develop international laws as a means of protecting the environment and to broaden access to environmental justice through the rules and institutions of international law. Giving expert legal advice, assistance and advocacy to a broad range of groups is at the core of FIELD's work

FIELD promotes the development of the law through research, the dissemination of the law through teaching, training and publishing, and the application of the law through advocacy, advice and assistance. In addition to a large and varied portfolio of projects across many areas of sustainable development, FIELD has three core programmes covering: Biodiversity and Marine Resources; Climate Change and Energy; and Trade, Investment and Sustainable Development.

An essential aspect of FIELD's work across these programmes is its commitment to strengthening capacity, particularly in developing and transition countries. FIELD's Internship Programme trains law students from around the world, who work closely with FIELD lawyers and staff in every facet of the organisation's work.

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International Environmental Law Research Centre (IELRC)

The International Environmental Law Research Centre is an independent, non-profit research organisation that provides a forum for collaborative research between researchers in the North and South. The aim of the IELRC is to contribute to the establishment of legal and institutional frame-works that foster sustainable environmental management in developing countries in an equitable international context.

IELRC's mission is to undertake policy-related academic research relating to the environment in a North-South context. IELRC specifically seeks to contribute to the development of legal and institutional frameworks that foster equitable and sustainable environmental management at the local, national and international level by fostering links between research communities and policy-makers in the North and South. IELRC focuses on international environmental legal issues including biodiversity, climate change and desertification, in particular with regard to their North-South dimension.

IELRC also works on a number of questions that are closely related to environmental issues like the impacts of intellectual property rights on environmental management, in particular in the context of the development of new biotechnologies and the relationship between the realisation of human rights and sustainable environmental management both at the international and national levels. IELRC has a network of regional and national expertise that allows it to provide grounded research. Its two main areas of regional expertise are East Africa and India.

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International Network for Environmental Compliance and Enforcement (INECE)

The International Network for Environmental Compliance and Enforcement is a network of government and non-government enforcement and compliance practitioners from over 100 countries. INECE is dedicated using regulatory and non-regulatory approaches to guide compliance with and enforcement of environmental laws and regulations that promote the sustainable use of natural resources and the protection of ecosystem integrity at the global, regional, and national levels.

The INECE mission is to contribute to a healthy and clean environment, sustainable use of natural resources and the protection of ecosystem integrity. INECE's goals are: raising awareness to compliance and enforcement; developing networks for enforcement cooperation; and strengthening capacity to implement and enforce environmental requirements.

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IUCN Environmental Law Programme (ELP)

The mission of the IUCN Environmental Law Programme is to lay the strongest possible legal foundation at the international, regional and national levels for environmental conservation in the context of sustainable development.

The ELP is an integrated programme of activities that assists decision makers with information, legal analysis, advisory services, legislative drafting, mentoring and capacity building at national, regional and global levels. The ELP also provides the opportunity and the forum for governments, NGOs and others to network and to share information and discuss ideas.

This programme of activities is delivered through the collective efforts of the CEL, ELC and a worldwide network of Regional and Country Offices:

The Commission on Environmental Law (CEL) is an extensive global volunteer network of environmental law specialists whose mission it is to assist in laying the strongest possible legal foundation for the conservation of the natural environment, both internationally and nationally; CEL serves as the principal source of legal technical advice to the IUCN, its members and collaborating institutions on all aspects of environmental conservation law. The Environmental Law Centre (ELC) is a professional international office, which is recognized around the world as a leading global centre of excellence in environmental law; the ELC is also the headquarters for the UNEP, FAO, IUCN Management Unit for the joint initiative known as ECOLEX (see below) through which the three organizations provide web based access to their comprehensive holdings of environmental law information. IUCN lawyers are based in Regional and Country Offices all around the world.

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Website: <http://www.iucn.org/themes/law>

REGIONAL AND SPECIAL INTEREST ORGANISATIONS

AIDA (Interamerican Association for Environmental Defense)

AIDA combines the expertise of public interest environmental law organizations from eight countries of the Americas, and provides a forum for these groups to jointly design and apply solutions to shared environmental problems. AIDA's mission is to empower citizens

to protect human health and the environment by developing and enforcing national and international environmental laws and mechanisms for citizen participation.

AIDA combines legal work with efforts to empower and educate the communities it represents. AIDA also works with technical experts, and transfers needed information to NGOs, communities and governments throughout the hemisphere.

Program Areas are Biodiversity and Critical Natural Ecosystems; Trade and the Environment; and Human Rights and the Environment

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ASIL Wildlife Interest Group

The purpose of the Wildlife Interest Group of the American Society of International Law (ASIL) is to contribute to the objective of conserving endangered wildlife species by helping to strengthen international wildlife treaty regimes, regional accords and national legislation that implements international treaty regimes. The group's efforts focus on scholarship and public education efforts.

Each year the International Wildlife Law Conference is organised with the purpose of bringing together participants from throughout the world in an ongoing colloquy about the role of international law and legal institutions in furthering the goal of species conservation and protection of the Earth's biological diversity.

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Website: <http://www.internationalwildlifelaw.org/index.shtml>

Forest Integrity Network (FIN)

FIN is an initiative to combat corruption in use of the world's forests. It is a multi-stakeholder global coalition seeking to bring NGOs, governments, international organizations, the private sector and academics to deal with corruption and its impact on sustainable forest use. FIN seeks to foster information exchange on programs, models and best practices to fight forest corruption.

FIN is hosted by Transparency International and has a small coordinating Secretariat at TI headquarters in Berlin, Germany. FIN seeks to accomplish its goals through building up a diverse and multi-stakeholder membership, and through drawing on expertise from all parts of the globe. It is thus guided by an expanding group of advisors and resource persons, as well as a multi-stakeholder Steering Committee, consisting of representatives from civil society groups, the private sector, multilateral organizations, and academia.

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Website: <http://www.transparency.org/fin>

REC Environmental Law Programme

The Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe (REC) is a non-partisan, non-advocacy, not-for-profit organisation with a mission to assist in solving

environmental problems in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). The Center fulfils this mission by encouraging cooperation among NGOs, governments, businesses and other environmental stakeholders, by supporting the free exchange of information and by promoting public participation in environmental decision-making.

The activities of REC concentrate a.o. on: support the development of domestic environmental and sustainable development law through projects aimed at strengthening legal mechanisms applying international standards; support the implementation of environmental legal requirements on the local level through capacity-building aimed at local government authorities and other local stakeholders, as well as the use of locally applicable legal tools; and support the development of professional and responsible environmental legal communities in the beneficiary countries, including environmental advocates, judges, prosecutors and other legal professionals. Through its Small Grants Support scheme support is offered to lawyers or their organisations to set up and operate environmental legal advocacy and advisory centres.

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DATABASES AND RESOURCES

ASIL Guide to Electronic Resources for International Law

This Guide of the American Society of International Law discusses electronic resources of international environmental law. The types of resources covered emphasize the Internet but also include CD-ROMs, library catalogs, and on-line subscription/commercial services. The emphasis here is on English-language sources.

Website: <http://www.asil.org/resource/env1.htm>

ECOLEX - A gateway to Environmental Law

ECOLEX is an information service on environmental law, operated jointly by FAO, IUCN and UNEP (see above). Its purpose is to build capacity worldwide by providing the most comprehensive possible global source of information on environmental law.

Website: <http://www.ecolex.org>

ENTRI - Environmental Treaties and Resource Indicators

A fast, convenient, comprehensive online search service for finding information about environmental treaties and national resource indicators. The ENTRI system is unique in allowing the visitor to construct queries that integrate these different types of data.

Website: <http://sedac.ciesin.columbia.edu/entri>

Globelaw - Sources and Reference Material for International Conventions and International Law and Policy

The site contains many full-text international environmental agreements arranged under the following headings: Nuclear Legal Materials, Climate and Ozone Legal Materials, Basel Convention Legal Materials, Law of the Sea and Other Legal Materials, and International and Environmental Law Sources and Reference Material.

Website: <http://www.globelaw.com>

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