



WORLD CONGRESS ON JUSTICE, GOVERNANCE AND LAW FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

ANNOUNCEMENT AND CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

▶ 18 -19 June 2012
Rio de Janeiro, **Brazil**



In partnership with:



BACKGROUND:

Despite many international conferences and important developments in environmental policy, law and governance, only insufficient progress has been made towards achieving many of the internationally agreed environmental goals, targets and objectives. Indeed, in implementing environmental law, including Multilateral Environmental Agreements, States have encountered many challenges in their quest for sustainable development and in improving the overall state of the global environment.

The effective implementation of environmental laws requires the informed participation of key decision-makers to not only shape the interpretation and enforcement of these instruments within their jurisdictions, but also to develop institutional frameworks and regulations focusing on environmental governance and accountability issues as well as the role of law in protecting natural resources and promoting sustainable development.

OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES:

Due to their pivotal roles in developing, interpreting and enforcing environmental laws as well as in designing and building governance frameworks to regulate and monitor environmental protection, UNEP, supported by several important partners, has targeted the corpus of environmental law and governance decision-makers as part of a concerted effort to improve the effective national implementation of environmental commitments, including MEAs. Rio+20 is a critical opportunity to obtain strong commitments from these stakeholders in the pursuit of the goals of sustainable development.

Based on the successful *Global Judges Symposium on Sustainable Development and the Role of Law* that was convened by UNEP on the eve of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg in 2002, the *World Congress on Justice, Governance and Law for Environmental Sustainability (the World Congress)* will bring together Attorneys-General, Chief Prosecutors, Auditors-General, Chief Justices and Senior Judges and other legal practitioners from around the world to contribute to the outcomes of the Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development and to share its findings and recommendations with the Conference.

The overall aim of the World Congress is to foster a common vision and principles among key stakeholders on how to transform discussions into action and how to use justice, law and governance to promote sustainable development through the outcomes of Rio +20 and beyond. Thus, the World Congress will directly contribute to the Rio+20 Conference by focusing on the legal underpinnings of the themes of the 'Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development' and 'Green Economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication'. It will outline the future actions required by national and international legal stakeholders to promote sustainable development in the 21st century founded on the rule of law and effective governance.

The World Congress on Justice, Governance and Law for Environmental Sustainability is expected to:

1. Promoting the further evolution of international and national environmental law, including the fundamental principles underpinning them as well as their effective implementation and enforcement;
2. Promoting effective national and international environmental governance;
3. Strengthening the nexus between social justice and environmental sustainability;
4. Providing a global platform that institutionalizes the engagement and cooperation of key players at a national level including judges, prosecutors, auditors as well as parliamentarians with the support of intergovernmental institutions and processes.

STRENGTHENING ENVIRONMENTAL LAW BEYOND RIO+20:

Based on the expected outcomes, the World Congress is intended to lead to the formulation and presentation of an outcome document that will take the form of a Statement of Principles on Justice, Governance and Law for Environmental Sustainability. The outcome document will be presented to the President of Rio+20 and to the Heads of State and other high level representatives at the Rio+20 Conference by the Chair of the World Congress. Beyond Rio+20, the long-term objective of the World Congress is to become an important platform in strengthening environmental laws and governance frameworks for the future national implementation of environmental law and policy through the involvement of, and in consultation with, Congress participants and other key stakeholders.

TARGET AUDIENCE:

- ▶ Judges (specifically Chief Justices and senior judges);
- ▶ Attorneys-General and Public Prosecutors;
- ▶ Auditors-General (Supreme Audit Institutions); and
- ▶ Ministers of Environment and Justice.

We further welcome the participation of the following stakeholders:

- ▶ Chief compliance and enforcement officers (such as government environmental authorities);
- ▶ Legislators (particularly parliamentarians); and
- ▶ Environmental Lawyers.

Nominations¹ to attend the World Congress should be submitted to the UNEP Secretariat, as indicated below, by 16 April 2012.

United Nations Environment Programme, Division of Environmental Law & Conventions,
P.O. Box 30552, Nairobi, Kenya
e-mail: World.Congress@unep.org

PREPARATORY PROCESS:

Two Preparatory Meetings are scheduled for the World Congress to initiate discussions on the themes of justice, governance and law in preparation towards formulating an outcome document for the World Congress.

- Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 12 and 13 October 2011
- Buenos Aires, Argentina, 23 and 24 April 2012

The World Congress is supported by an Executive Steering Committee as well as a High Level International Advisory Committee to provide advice, guidance and support in the preparations for the World Congress.

LIST OF PARTNERS:

- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)
- International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol)
- International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions – Working Group on Environmental Auditing (INTOSAI - WGEA)
- Organization of American States (OAS)
- South Pacific Regional Environment Program (SPREP)
- World Bank
- International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)

It is understood that the Partners are not expected to promote any principles or positions that may be developed as part of the World Congress beyond what is set forth in their institutional mandates and policies.

¹ Limited financial support is available for participants from developing countries and countries with economies in transition in line with the prevailing rules and regulations of the United Nations.

OUTLOOK: PROVISIONAL AGENDA AND TIMETABLE

The discussions, to be held both in plenary and in roundtables, will center around the legal underpinnings of the two themes of the Rio+20 Conference: (a) a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication; and (b) the institutional framework for sustainable development. They are expected to provide the basis for recommended action for the *World Congress on Justice, Governance and Law for Environmental Sustainability*.

Against this background, the three main topics of the World Congress will be:

- The future of environmental law: opportunities and emerging issues.
- Social justice and environmental sustainability: new approaches.
- The challenges of environmental governance at national regional and global levels: improving effectiveness.

Sunday, 17 June 2012	Monday, 18 June 2012 - Tuesday, 19 June 2012*
<p>Ceremonial Opening of the World Congress on Justice, Governance and Law for Environmental Sustainability.</p> <p>Supreme Court of Rio de Janeiro (tbc).</p>	<p>Opening Plenary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Organization of Work- Keynote Addresses- Plenary Discussion <p>Topical Discussions on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The future of environmental law: opportunities and emerging issues- Social justice and environmental sustainability: new approaches- The challenges of environmental governance at national regional and global levels: improving effectiveness <p>Closing Plenary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Reports from topical discussions- Discussion and Adoption of Outcome Document- Closing Statements

Participants will have a unique opportunity to deliberate on the role and inter-linkages of justice, law and governance as essential dimensions of environmental sustainability, as well as on environmental sustainability as an integral component of justice, law and governance for sustainable development. Participants will also be called to reflect upon and share experiences regarding their specific role as leading representatives of fundamental legal and policy functions at the national level in influencing appropriate mechanisms and tools to safeguard and promote environmental sustainability. This includes acknowledging the crucial part they play in promoting and championing the governance changes required at national, regional and global levels in order to contribute towards a more effective implementation of environmental law and thus environmentally sustainable world overall.

* Interpretation will be provided in the following languages: English, French and Spanish.

For further information contact:

World.Congress@unep.org or <http://www.unep.org/DELC/worldcongress/index.asp>

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