Surrey International Law Centre

Cultural Legitimacy and the International Law and Policy on Climate Change

International Interdisciplinary Seminar

21 June 2011

The Surrey International Law Centre (SILC) is pleased to announce a call for papers for an international interdisciplinary seminar on cultural legitimacy and the international law and policy on climate change that will take place on 21 June 2011 at the School of Law, University of Surrey.

Climate change poses fundamental and varied challenges to all communities across the globe. The adaptation and mitigation strategies proposed by governments and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are likely to require radical and fundamental shifts in socio-political structures, technological and economic systems, organisational forms, and modes of regulation. The sheer volume of law and policy emanating from the international level makes it uncertain which type of regulatory or policy framework is likely to have a positive impact. As a result, climate change is not just an environmental problem requiring technical and regulatory solutions; it is a cultural arena in which a variety of stakeholders – state agencies, firms, industry associations, NGOs, and local communities – engage in contestation as well as collaboration over the form and substance of evolving regimes of governance. The success or failure of proposed measures will depend on their acceptability within the local constituencies within which they are sought to be applied. Therefore there is an urgent need to better comprehend and theorise the role of cultural legitimacy in the choice and effectiveness of international legal and policy interventions aimed at tackling the impact of climate change.

This seminar seeks to contribute to research on the international law and policy of climate change by focusing on the issue of cultural legitimacy. Beginning from the premise that legitimacy critiques of international climate change regulation have the capacity to positively influence policy trends and legal choices, we seek a range of papers, from across all the disciplines that investigate the link between the efficacy of international legal and policy mechanisms on climate change and cultural legitimacy or local acceptance.

Some topics of interest include (but are not limited to):

- Cultural legitimacy as a tool of analysis within international law generally and international environmental law in particular
- Climate change institutions and local change agents and institutions
- Cultural differences in policy and legal instrument choice towards climate change
Strategies for enhancing the cultural legitimacy of mitigation and adaptation to climate change

Local social movements and their contribution to international climate change policy and regulation

Cultural perceptions of climate risk and impacts on climate policy choice

Methods in cultural legitimacy analysis

The aim of the seminar is to bring together interdisciplinary scholars who are exploring the interplay between and amongst law, society, culture and climate change, in order to build a more coherent field of research on the cultural legitimacy of climate change law and policy.

Call for Papers

Abstracts for poster presentations, short papers (10 minutes) and research papers (20 minutes) on these themes will be accepted until 15 February 2011. They should be a maximum of 300 words, in English, sent either by fax to +44 1483 68 6208 or by email to Thoko Kaimo at t.kaimo@surrey.ac.uk or Regina Rauxloh at r.rauxloh@surrey.ac.uk. Authors should include full contact information (name, institutional affiliation, mailing address, phone, fax and e-mail address).

Selected papers from the conference will be published in an edited book.