**Virtual conference**

15th & 16th October 2020

Despite the fact that the body of EU environmental law is one of the most advanced and extensive in the world, Europe’s environment is in a critical state. Polluting practices continue to thrive in many parts of Europe and individuals who suffer from the negative consequences of these practices receive remarkably little redress. In particular, access to justice for individuals and environmental organisations is often difficult and time-consuming.

Access to the EU courts for non-privileged applicants including individuals and environmental organisations is a key issue. This is also evident from the Aarhus Convention Compliance Committee finding the EU to be in violation of the Aarhus Convention for not providing legal standing to members of the public to access EU courts.

The conference will take place online and will aim to bring together individuals and organisations to discuss and reflect on the current state of access to justice on the national and EU level. It will enable participants to share their experiences and knowledge and to reflect on future challenges such as strategic litigation to make the green transition happen.

The conference is part of the LIFE funded project “Access to Justice” (EARL-A2J). Organised over nine EU Member States, our project focuses on raising awareness among environmental organisations about access to justice rights and their implementation in EU level. In order to make sure the public can challenge environmental wrongdoing in court.

This conference is the second conference in our project and will provide an opportunity to share our experiences regarding the state of play in the different countries of the project, and to engage in discussions with representatives from EARL-A2J and member States on the implementation of EU environmental law. It will also provide guidance on the legal and institutional framework and offer practical advice on how to ensure access to justice.

**Conference Chair**

Dr. Anja Ryoo

Co-Director, Centre for Law & the Environment, University College Cork

**1ST SESSION**

9:00 to 11:00 am

Keynote speech

Dr. Áine Ryall

Conference Chair

Reflections on Access to Justice in Environmental Matters

**2ND SESSION**

12:30 to 2:00 pm

Overview of access to justice in four national jurisdictions

Speakers:

- Anais Berthier, Head of EU Affairs, ClientEarth.
- Arnaud Schwartz, Environmental lawyer, Independent Institute for Environmental Law and the Environment;
- Kathleen Pauleweit, Senior Environmental Lawyer, Director and founding member of the International Institute for Law and the Environment (IIDMA, Spain);
- Agata Szafraniuk, Wildlife lawyer in the Białowieża case, ClientEarth.

**3RD SESSION**

2:00 to 4:00 pm

Access to Justice in the EU: access to the EU courts for non-privileged applicants including individuals and environmental organisations is a key issue. This is also evident from the Aarhus Convention Compliance Committee finding the EU to be in violation of the Aarhus Convention for not providing legal standing to members of the public to access EU courts.

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