



HAUT-COMMISSARIAT AUX DROITS DE L'HOMME • OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
PALAIS DES NATIONS • 1211 GENEVA 10, SWITZERLAND

www.ohchr.org • TEL: +41 22 917 9159 • FAX: +41 22 917 9006 • E-MAIL: jeenvironment@ohchr.org

Mandate of the Independent Expert on human rights and the environment

3 October 2014

Dear friends and colleagues,

This letter is to provide an update on my work as the UN Independent Expert on human rights and the environment since the last newsletter in July.*

Upcoming deadline. First, I want to alert all of you to an upcoming deadline: UNEP is calling for governments, academics, and civil society to comment on the draft Guide to the UNEP Bali Guidelines on Rio Principle 10 (working title: “Putting Rio Principle 10 into Action”). The Bali Guidelines were adopted in 2010 by UNEP member states to implement Rio Principle 10, which as most of you no doubt know sets out the fundamental principles of environmental democracy: access to information, participation, and remedy. The Guide to the Bali Guidelines will help in the implementation of Rio Principle 10 by collecting case examples and jurisprudence from a wide range of national and international practice. The Guide is expected to be published by the end of 2014 and will be translated into official UN languages and widely distributed. The draft is available at the UNEP Civil Society website: <http://www.unep.org/civil-society/Implementation/Principle10/tabid/105013/Default.aspx>.

UNEP emphasizes that all comments are welcome. Particularly useful would be positive examples from developing and transitional societies regarding legislation and practical implementation in access to information, public participation and access to justice in environmental matters. To facilitate the taking into account of comments, UNEP requests that you download the draft Guide and insert comments or propose changes by using the Track Changes function. Alternatively you could provide comments with clear references to the page and paragraph. **Comments should be emailed to Stephenstec@gmail.com and copied to civil.society@unep.org by or before 15 October 2014.**

UNITAR/Yale Conference. On 5-7 September, UNITAR and Yale hosted their third Conference on Environmental Governance and Democracy, with a focus on Human Rights, Environmental Sustainability, Post-2015 Development, and the Future Climate Regime. The conference was a great success, allowing more than 150 scholars and policy experts to meet to discuss their work on human rights and the environment. More than 100 papers were presented. The papers and other information about the conference are available at: <http://conference.unitar.org/yale2014/>. A video recording of the presentation I gave to the

* If you know of someone else who would like to be on this email distribution list, please let us know by reply email, and we'll add them. If you do not want to be on this list, let us know the same way, and we'll remove your name.


conference is also available at that website. (I wasn't actually recorded speaking at the conference, so I re-recorded my remarks the following week!)

ASEAN Workshop: On 13-15 September, the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights held a Workshop on Human Rights, Environment and Climate Change in Yangon, Myanmar. The workshop was led by the Representative of Myanmar to the AICHR, H.E. U Kyaw Tint Swe, with the support of the Danish Institute for Human Rights (DIHR) and the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Workshop discussed the inter-linkages between environmental sustainability and its impact on the enjoyment of human rights of the ASEAN people, and aimed to discuss the development of a regional strategy as to how to mainstream human rights based approach to environmental policymaking and protection. More information is available at <http://aichr.org/news/aichr-workshop-on-human-rights-environment-and-climate-change/>.

Best Practices. As I have described in previous newsletters, a major element of my mandate is to identify, promote and exchange views on best practices relating to the use of human rights obligations to inform, support and strengthen environmental policymaking. We are now hard at work compiling the many examples of such practices we have received through consultations, the responses to our questionnaire, and at meetings such as the UNITAR/Yale Conference. I expect to have more than 100 good practices to submit to the Human Rights Council in March 2015, in my third annual report. The posted deadline for responses has passed, but if you are still interested in submitting a good practice, please do so as soon as possible and we will do our best to take it into account!

As always, please feel free to share your comments and questions about the mandate!

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John H. Knox', written in a cursive style.

John H. Knox
UN Independent Expert on Human Rights and the Environment
Henry C. Lauerman Professor of International Law
Wake Forest University School of Law