



CLIMATE CHANGE – RIGHTS OF PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS

Day: Wed 13 Nov, 2019

Time: 09:00-13:00

Venue: Arktikum, Polarium

Moderator: Leena Heinämäki, the Northern Institute for Environmental and Minority Law (NIEM), Arctic Centre, University of Lapland

PROGRAM (speaking times include a short time for discussion)

09:00 – 09:40 Keynote: **Heta-Elena Heiskanen**, Senior Specialist, Ministry of the Environment, Finland

[Youth participation and leadership in climate change](#)

09:40 – 10:05 **Sebastien Duyck**, Senior Attorney, Center for International Environmental Law, Geneva, Switzerland

10:05 – 10:30 **Afroja Khanam**, PhD Researcher, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Lapland
[Climatic Adaptation Governance for Human Rights Protection in Coastal Bangladesh: Challenges and Institutional linkages](#)

10:30 – 10:55 **Julia Bobina**, Climate, Environment and Hot Spots Adviser at the International Barents Secretariat, Kirkenes Norway

[Climate change in northern Norway: young people's perceptions and engagement with climate change](#)

Coffee Break

11:30 – 11:55 **Noor Jahan Punam**, Junior Researcher, Arctic Centre, University of Lapland, Finland
[The gender perspective on Indigenous traditional Knowledge and resilience](#)

11:55 – 12:20 **Panu Itkonen**, Senior Researcher, Arctic Centre, University of Lapland, Finland
[Climate change and Sami people's fishing rights](#)

12:20 – 12:45 Interview of a Sámi artist and activist **Stina Aletta Aikio**

12:45 – 13:00 End discussion



Youth participation and leadership in climate change

Youth participation and leadership in climate change have been taken place in various forms. The purpose of the presentation is to provide an overview and examples, how the youth have argue for their rights and rights of the future generations in relation to climate crisis. The focus is in legal proceedings and international human rights complaint mechanisms.

Heta-Elena Heiskanen
Senior Specialist
Ministry of the Environment, Finland

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Climatic Adaptation Governance for Human Rights Protection in Coastal Bangladesh: Challenges and Institutional linkages

Human rights protection with governance approach can be one of the major climatic adaptation strategies for the marginalized people in coastal Bangladesh and Arctic. In this governance approach, multiple stakeholders' involvements are essential prerequisite although the main stakeholder, marginalized people, is currently vulnerable in the power structure. Based on their top-down understanding of climate change adaptation, the government developed policy documents which causes human rights concerns like food insecurity and displacements. Thus the current human rights concern raises question about the effectiveness of the climatic adaptation approach. So, the major objective of this paper is to find out the reasons for increasing human rights concerns over the marginalized people despite the government's continuous efforts for climate change adaptation.

Here, adaptation is described as the coping with livelihood challenges with local practices and their inclusion in the laws, policies, and programs. In Bangladesh, this adaptation argument gets better understanding based on the research project, Deltas, vulnerability and Climate Change: Migration and Adaptation (DECCMA) in 2014-2018. For this project, data were collected with workshops, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and social surveys in 2016-2017. Social surveys were conducted to 1500 respondents selected with random sampling from the climate hotspots in Bangladesh. Qualitative data were collected with 29 FGDs from the same hotspots. Based on the data analyses, the findings of the paper argue that marginalized people are excluded from the policy documents like Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP) due to the gap between local community and government with specific context of local and scientific knowledge, and autonomous and planned adaptation. This gap increases their human rights concerns. To address the current human rights concerns, governance approach can promote marginalized people's understanding of climate change adaptation in the policy review, making, and implementation process.

Afroja Khanam
PhD Researcher
Faculty of Social Sciences
University of Lapland

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Climate change in northern Norway: young people's perceptions and engagement with climate change

The issue of climate change has become an important topic for society, business, government and other international spheres. Perceptions of risk and the need to act on the basis of everyday knowledge hinge on whether the climate problem is viewed as salient and on the individual's values and norms, a degree of trust in climate science, public debate and local potential in meeting climate change. Scholars around the world has recently underlined the need for broader research on youth and their perceptions of climate change. In contrast to the manifold studies on adult's understandings and perceptions of climate change, there is an absence of youth voices which is a major research gap and climate policy shortcoming. This master thesis investigated Norwegian youth's knowledge, perceptions and attitudes towards climate change risk as they are the generation that will face consequences of a changing climate, their views are especially important to understand.

Furthermore, the objective was to explore the degree to which the climate problem is perceived as salient, which may play a crucial role in shaping individual's willingness or ability to transform to a low-emission society. The study applied the cultural theory of risk framework. Aiming at collecting data on individual's perceptions of the issue, the choice of semi-structured interviews as the flexible qualitative research method was preferable. Seventeen young people aged 18-27 participated in the study. The thesis found that young people's initial associations with climate change concerned its severe impacts and causes. The study investigated that young people see the absence of political action on climate issue and not many perceive politicians as trustworthy voice on climate change. In addition, the thesis outlined gender differences observed in the responses of young Norwegians.

Julia Bobina
Climate, Environment and Hot Spots Adviser
at the International Barents Secretariat
Kirkenes, Norway

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The gender perspective on Indigenous traditional Knowledge and resilience

In this paper, the author explores Sami women's contribution to indigenous traditional knowledge, separately and their contribution to livelihood aspects for example, as they make most of the clothing, cook traditional food and has a role to play in fishing (specially in Norway). Further focus is put on their resilience against climate change due to their specific bond with the nature and environment simply because of being women. The issue is explored from the perspective of ecofeminist theory and right to self-determination.

Noor Jahan Punam
Junior Researcher
Arctic Centre
University of Lapland

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Climate change and Sami people's fishing rights

State officials named climate change and consequent warming of waters as key reasons for recent difficulties of salmon in rivers of Northern Finland. In order to support the survival of salmon, the state representatives decided to reduce salmon fishing by 30 per cent. This led to new fishing regulations, which decreased fishing rights of the Sami people in 2016. Next summer, five Sami people broke the new fishing regulations by fishing in Vetsi river and reasoned their actions by claiming that they have immemorial usufruct rights to the river. The case was taken to district court that in 2019 made a decision not to prosecute the Sami. The court reasoned its decision in favor of the Sami's fishing rights by stating that the constitution of Finland secures Sami peoples' rights to maintain and develop their traditional culture including fishing. This is one example of how Sami peoples' interpretation of their own rights questions state legislation and challenges state decisions.

This general legal dilemma between the Sami and the state is far from resolved. For the sake of future generations, it should be possible to use new tools to settle this kind of disagreements. This presentation attempts to support such development by means of legal anthropology. Its representative Franz von Benda-Beckman has claimed that problems between different interest groups have to be solved on political level, and dilemmas and questions that are met can be made visible by the legal pluralism approach that focuses on the coexistence of different normative orders within one socio-political space. In my opinion, legal anthropology can also help to find ways to evaluate different normative orders. Procedural rights of citizens in environmental decision making play their part in a situation where climate change sets its constraints.

Panu Itkonen
Senior Researcher
Arctic Centre
University of Lapland

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