



‘Judicial Portal’ Fact Sheet

‘Designed for judges with judges’

Launched at the UNEP Global Judges Symposium

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Event co-sponsor: IUCN - The World Conservation Union

What is the Portal?

The Portal is the world’s first Internet based means for judges from around the world to communicate with one another and to share environmental law judgements and information.

Why has the Portal been created?

The Judicial Portal has been created to progress the collective efforts of UNEP and IUCN to help create a global network of judges. The Portal will enable judges from around the world to exchange information on environmental law relevant to their decision making and will create an up to date global data bank of environmental law cases available to all judges.

Who designed the Portal?

The development of the Portal has followed on from discussions between UNEP and IUCN on the best way of using technology to help create a global network of judges. The Portal has been developed and designed by the IUCN ELC in co-operation with IUCN Headquarters and the Hon Justice Paul Stein AM (Australia). The Portal forms a separately accessible part of the IUCN Environmental Law Programme (ELP) Website (iucn.org/themes/law) and will be maintained by the IUCN Environmental Law Centre (ELC). It will be modified and improved over time in collaboration with judges and UNEP.

Who places the information on the Portal?

This is done by judges (or their staff). It will be supplemented on exceptional occasions by the IUCN upon request from a judge or UNEP to include an historical judgement of high importance. However, the clear intent and purpose of the Portal is for the content of the site to be developed by judges. There will be no editing nor screening of any information that is posted on the site.





What information will the Portal contain?

The Portal will include copies of judgements uploaded to the site, summaries of judgements posted on the site, comments sent by judges on judgements, together with various user statistics and search facilities. It will also include a ‘discussion forum’ to enable debate and exchange of information amongst judges on topics of interest.

How will judgements be further used?

This Portal will also be used as the primary source of judgements to be included on the publicly accessible global collection of environmental law and policy materials known as ECOLEX, the ‘Gateway to Environmental Law’, a joint initiative of UNEP, IUCN and FAO (www.ecolex.org). For this purpose, a committee of judges may be established to review the judgements placed on the site. The Hon Justice Paul Stein AM (Australia) has volunteered to chair an ECOLEX Judicial Committee, which could be established for this purpose.

Will the discussion forum or comments on judgements be used elsewhere?

The Portal is intended to be a site where judges are able to communicate freely amongst themselves. Comments and discussions will not be used for any other purpose by IUCN or UNEP and all participants will be requested to maintain confidentiality.

Who will be able to access the Portal?

The Portal has been designed for judges with judges. It will only be accessible to judges and selected staff of IUCN and UNEP upon approval of the Head of the IUCN ELP. Access will be by password and passwords will be issued to members of the judiciary upon request. While all efforts will be exerted to protect the portal from unauthorised use, no guarantee can be given regarding unauthorised access.

How do I get a password?

Access to the Portal is managed by the IUCN ELC Webmistress, Anni Lukács, with support from Alexandra Fante. A password will be issued to judges upon request. Instructions on how to access and navigate the Portal will be sent to you with your password. Contact details and requested information is provided on a separate sheet.

When will the Portal commence operation?

Passwords will be issued upon request from 1 September 2002, the date the Portal will go ‘live’. Assuming all information is correct, passwords will be issued within one week of being requested.

