



IUCN – The World Conservation Union

Environmental Law Programme

Background: IUCN and UNEP and the Judiciary

UNEP and IUCN and their various offices and programmes have a long history of co-operation through entering into both general and specific memoranda of understanding.

UNEP and IUCN have each led significant initiatives over the past decade to help build the capacity of the courts and judges to deal with environment and natural resource management and to facilitate the exchange of information between judges.

These significant initiatives have included UNEP and IUCN providing strong support to one other, including:

- IUCN contributing speakers and co-sponsoring UNEP led symposia in Colombo (for the SACEP Region), Manila (for the ASEAN Region) and Brisbane (for the Pacific Region),
- IUCN contributing speakers and co-sponsoring the UNEP Global Judges Symposium in Johannesburg,
- UNEP contributing speakers and co-sponsoring symposia led by IUCN in London (for the Western European Region) and Kuwait (for the Arabic Region),
- The development of ECOLEX, the internet 'gateway to Environmental Law',
- the development by the IUCN Environmental Law Centre of the joint IUCN-UNEP 'Judicial Portal' as a collaborative initiative.

As a result a very special relationship has developed between UNEP and IUCN in progressing this area of mutual interest.

IUCN and UNEP will either be the sponsor, or co-sponsor, of several symposia planned for 2003, namely:

- UNEP led symposia in the Ukraine (for the Eastern Europe/NIS region), and
- IUCN led symposia in the USA and Italy (for the Western European region).

Brief overview: IUCN Environmental Law Programme

The core of the IUCN Environmental Law Programme (ELP) comprises the Environmental Law Centre, established in Bonn over 30 years ago, and the IUCN Commission of Environmental Law. The IUCN ELP also works with numerous institutional partners from across the globe, with its network of Commission endorsed regional 'centres of excellence' and with IUCN regional and country offices.

Through its Commission on Environmental Law, IUCN has established a Judiciary Specialist Group. This group is Chaired by the Hon Justice Paul Stein, who also worked directly with the IUCN Environmental Law Centre in the development of the Judicial Portal, which he personally launched at the UNEP Global Judges Symposium.

IUCN ELP has an extensive history of working in genuine partnership with others to build capacity at the domestic level in every continent on earth, including through working with the judiciary. This will continue.

John Scanlon

Head, IUCN Environmental Law Programme
Director, IUCN Environmental Law Centre

Professor Nicholas Robinson

Chair, IUCN Commission on Environmental Law
IUCN Councillor and Legal Adviser

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IUCN - The World Conservation Union
IUCN Commission on Environmental Law

Symposium on Environmental Law for European Judges

Adelaide House, 10 – 11 October 2002

London Bridge Statement'

From 10-11 October 2002 judges from across Europe met with judges and scholars from across the globe to take initial steps in advancing the implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, insofar as it relates to the role of the judiciary in achieving sustainable development.

The Symposium agreed by acclamation to:

1. Establish, as of today, a European Judicial Forum to progress the outcomes of the Symposium, with its initial membership to comprise the European members of the judiciary who attended the Symposium.
2. Invite the IUCN Commission on Environmental Law Judiciary Specialist Group, Chaired by the Hon Justice Paul Stein, AM (Australia), to facilitate co-ordination of the work of the European Judicial Forum with broader global initiatives.
3. Commend the development of the IUCN/UNEP Judicial Portal by the IUCN Environmental Law Centre as an innovative and effective means to facilitate communication on environmental law amongst judges, and in particular the sharing of judgements, and to encourage judges from across Europe to participate actively in the Portal.
4. Endorse the need to draw upon fellow members of the judiciary and organisations such as IUCN and its partners to work actively with the judiciary at all levels to help enhance its knowledge base in environmental law and sustainable development law more generally.
5. Support the value of further investigating the pros and cons of establishing specialist environment courts, including specialist divisions of existing courts, and the appointment of judges with specialised knowledge in environmental law.
6. Recognise the value to society of enhancing the ability of citizens to obtain access to the courts to further enhance the effective implementation, compliance with, and enforcement of, environmental laws.
7. Extend a vote of thanks to the IUCN Commission on Environmental Law for taking the initiative in convening the Symposium, to each of the co sponsors, and to the staff of Berwin Leighton Paisner and the IUCN Environmental Law Centre for organising the event.

The Symposium also took note of the Johannesburg Principles adopted at the UNEP Global Judicial Symposium in August 2002, and commended UNEP and its cosponsors, including IUCN, on taking this global initiative.

Adelaide House
11 October 2002

